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THE SPACE GAMER

THE MAGAZINE OF ADVENTURE GAMING

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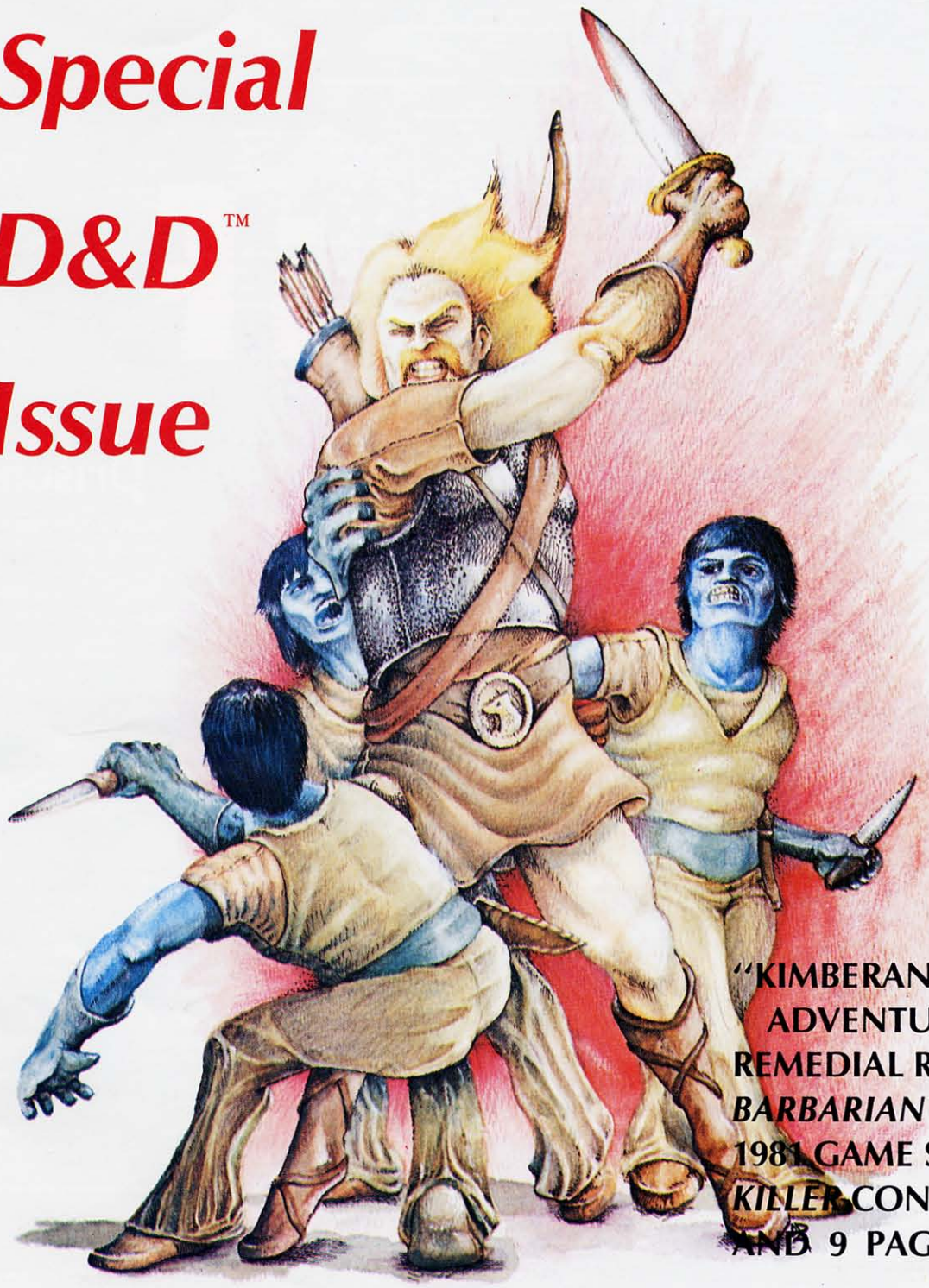

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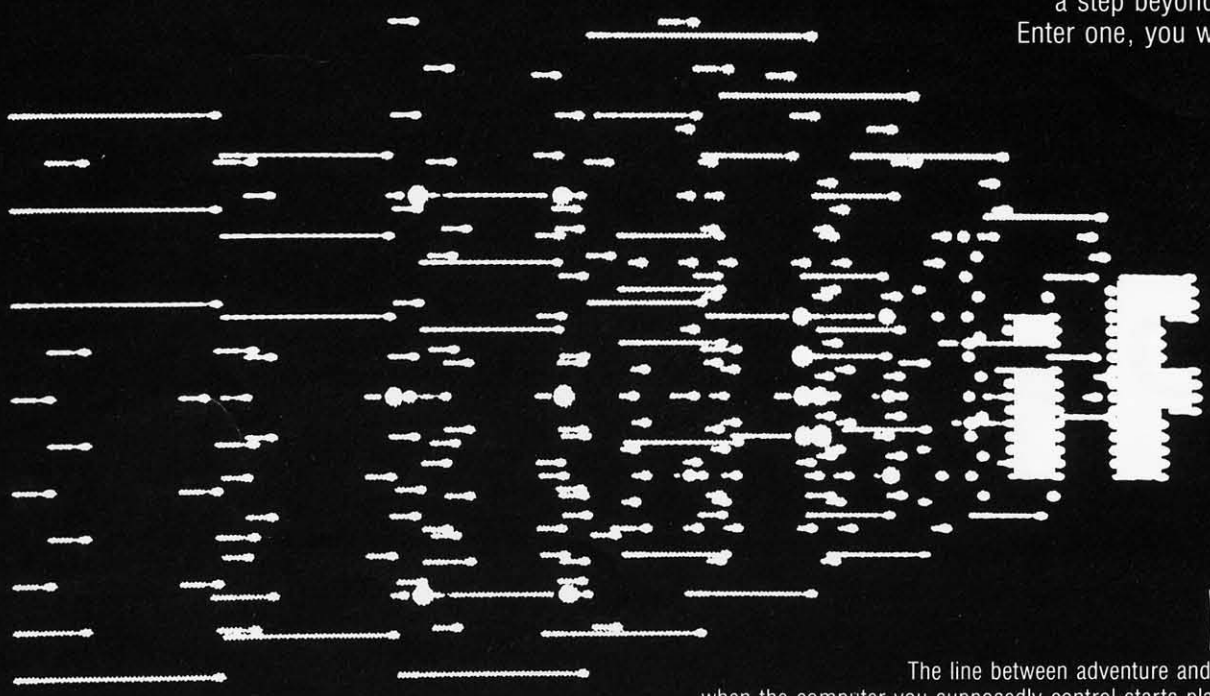

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In This Issue

This month, we have another special D&D issue, this time with a complete scenario, "Kimberani's Tomb." This adventure originated as a tournament scenario for TexCon: 1981. We hope you enjoy it.

Also for FRP gamers, there is an article which should put some life back in your campaigns. For *Traveller* enthusiasts, there is an article on playing doctor; for board gamers, a review and designer's notes for *Barbarian Prince*. Those who like *Killer* will find some deadly new items on page 10.

In the middle of the magazine is our 1981 Game Survey. We really would appreciate your filling it out and sending it in. Everyone likes to read the survey, but not enough gamers go to the trouble to let us know how they feel.

–Forrest Johnson

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Where We're Going

And it came to pass that, at long last, the lawyers were paid off and sent home, and the publishers could get back to publishing . . .

As you all know (those of you who have not been trapped in a barrel for the past year, that is), *Ogre* and *G.E.V.* have been off the market for quite some time, due to legal problems between Metagaming and myself . . . basically a case of me saying, "I bought these two games last year," and Metagaming saying, "You did not either!" Quite a waste of time. But . . . in a compromise agreement signed Nov. 17, Metagaming recognized my complete ownership of both games, as well as of *One-Page Bulge,* which they had also laid claim to. The compromise also ended several smaller disagreements.

So – now that that's settled, it's time for some new editions. And they're already in the works. We'll be releasing brand-new versions of both *Ogre* and *G.E.V.* at the Hobby Industry of America show this spring. Anticipated shipping date will be around Feb. 1.

The new editions will be highly upgraded. The counters will be somewhat larger than in the Metagaming editions, and they'll be backprinted; the back of each armor unit will show that unit in a disabled condition. Ogre Mark IIIs will have a Mark V counter on the back, and infantry will have different values on the back. This should speed play a lot.

The maps will also be larger . . . enough larger so that you'll be able to fit the counters in the hexes. And they'll be in *full color,* painted by Denis Loubet.

The rules have been revised to answer the most commonly-asked questions about the two games. And, since there were a few extra pages in the *Ogre* booklet, we'll be adding some pull-out reference sheets.

All in all, I'm extremely pleased with the way the new editions are shaping up. *Ogre* was the first game I designed; in some ways, I think it and *G.E.V.* may be my best works to date. They're certainly my best *sellers*! I've been looking forward to the day when I could publish them the way I think they *ought* to be published. It won't be long, now.

The HIA show will also see the re-release of the *Ogre* miniatures line originally produced by Martian Metals. In 1980 it had only four vehicles – the Mark V, Heavy Tank, Missile Tank, and G.E.V. – and it still won the Charles Roberts Award for "best vehicular line." We'll be releasing a reworked Mark V with much more detail, plus the three original small units and at least two others. The Mark III and more small units will follow – how soon depends on how fast the sculptors can work and how much you guys twist my arm for them.

And we'll be doing one other thing for HIA – a collection of the best *Ogre/G.E.V.* articles from the old TSGs. It'll be a mixed bag: scenarios, variants, strategy and tactics, fiction, design notes, and even a few cartoons. Most (if not all) of the contents will be drawn from the really old issues – 1979 and earlier – including some that are now out of print. I *am* updating the oldest articles where necessary to conform with current rules editions! The working title is "The Ogre Book, Volume I." Yes, there will almost certainly be a Volume II out later, including more current material – so you *Ogre* buffs can start writing!

One last note, and then I'll get off *Ogre.* I've noticed that, even though the games have been hard to find recently, many game conventions still have *Ogre/G.E.V.* tournaments. (If you think this was a boost to the ego, you're right!) Anyway, now that the games are back in print under my banner, we'll be happy to sponsor *Ogre/G.E.V.* tournaments at regional (and even local) cons. Just write us and tell us what you plan; we can send prize certificates or even suggested tournament rules if you need them. Please let us know how many attendees you expect and include an SASE and a copy of your convention flyer or brochure, for our files.

But I Thought You Already Moved . . .

Due to certain small complications (starting with the fact that the man who said he owned the property, didn't) . . . we moved again two weeks ago. We are now at the Metcalfe St. location *originally* published as our new office location. I am NOT giving the complete address, because mail should not be sent there. If you DID send any mail to that address in the past couple of months, the previous tenant probably lost it for us – can you try again, please? Remember: P.O. Box 18805, Austin, TX 78760-8805.

This location is better, though. It's not quite as classy-looking; it's a small brick building tacked onto the front of a big gray battleship of a warehouse. But it sits on nearly five acres of undeveloped land, smack in the middle of suburban South Austin. *Very* nice. We have more indoor playtest space than ever before . . . and, weather permitting, great gobs of *outdoor* space for miniatures, *Killer,* and what-have-you. Austin area gamers are cordially invited to look us up. If you can find us, you're welcome to drop in! We playtest every Friday, starting around 6 pm, and go on until we stop.

Next Issue

Our February issue will include an article on CHAMPIONS, the popular, new role-playing system;

"Storm," an adventure sequel to "Flare Star;"

A review of the computer board game THE SHATTERED ALLIANCE; and

An article on collecting miniatures for FRP games.

Cardboard Heroes Bases

Yesterday I saw the second-try samples of the Cardboard Heroes plastic bases. The factory's first attempt wasn't quite right; the second version was, to all intents and purposes, perfect. Unless some Act of God intervenes, we'll be ready to ship them by mid-December – so they're on the current order form. I may or may not manage to get any other ad for them into this issue; so here's the pertinent data:

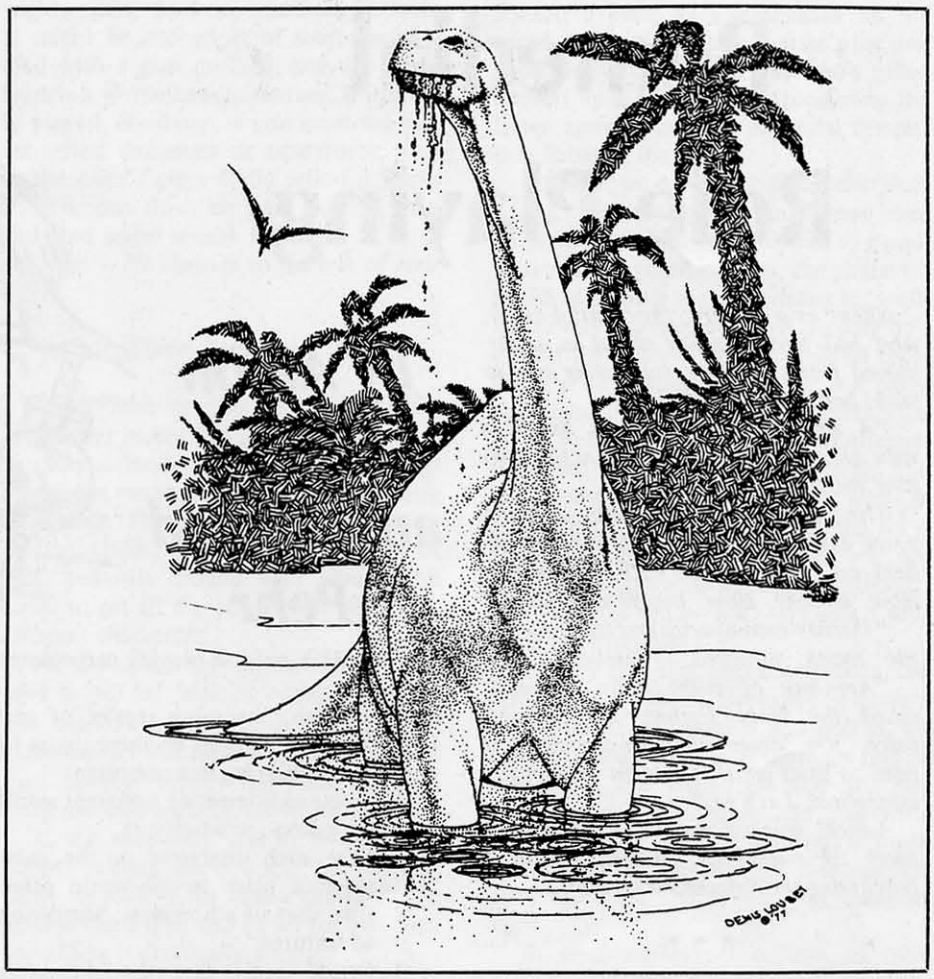
1. They're $3 per set ($3.50 by mail). One set provides 28" of bases – enough for a full set of 25mm human-types. The Animals set requires a little more.

2. They come in either black or white. Colors are not mixed within a $3 set.

3. They are *very* nice. They solve the worst Cardboard Hero problem – instability. They also look great. However, you don't *have* to have them if you don't want them!

Vaya con queso –

–Steve Jackson



GAME MASTER

GAME MASTER exists to answer questions on your favorite games. If you have a rules question or play problem, send it in. Questions to be answered will be chosen on the basis of general interest. They will be first referred to the game publisher or designer. If no response is received, GAME MASTER will offer its own interpretation of the rule. Sorry – no individual replies are possible.

Car Wars

1. Why can't a car do a bootlegger from reverse to forward? This is the only way I've been able to do one in my car because reverse gear isn't synchromesh.

2. What is the difficulty factor for jumping a motorcycle or car?

3. Can a turret gun be linked to front and/or rear guns?

4. It seems absurd to me that you can shoot out the rear armor, rear guns, cargo, driver and gunner, power plant, and then destroy the front guns, but you can't shoot them out through the front quarter panels (ditto for the rear). Why?

5. Why can't the weapons be destroyed from underbody or top hits?

6. Can a sidecar gunner or rider jump out and onto another bike or car? It could be suicide, but it could be a good time.

7. What happens to a car's speed when you do a hard swerve (or other maneuver) at, for example, 60 mph, and make the control table roll? Do you skid sideways to a halt, or end up going at a right angle at 60 mph, or what?

W.P. Miller
Clevo Hts., Ohio

1. The bootlegger rules were written partly from experience and partly from a book (no kidding) written to tell how to perform that maneuver; it was apparently intended for stunt drivers and aspiring lawbreakers. Based on both those, we concluded that a reverse bootlegger was out. If we get enough letters, we could change our minds! If you want to do a reverse bootlegger and your referee tells you it's impossible, take him for a little ride . . . if you're ever in Austin, you can show Chad and me.

2. Good question. We will do some research and include this in a supplement. At a rough approximation, D4 plus an extra D1 (not a separate roll) for each ten feet jumped. Thus, a 20-foot jump would be D6. However, speed would have to be appropriate to the distance jumped – too fast or too slow for a given distance is suicide – and data on that is proving hard to come by. Anybody want to write with information? We'll use it.

3. No.

4. It's not realistic, but it plays very cleanly that way. The artificial distinction saves a LOT of decision-making about the angle at which bullets hit the quarter-panel and a lot of die-rolling.

5. Same reason. If you insist on allowing such hits, use a die-rolling system to determine whether damage hits in the front, middle, or back of the designated side (or top/bottom).

6. Sure – why not? It would depend on his reflexes. To make a jump, the character must roll his reflex score or less on one die. Subtract 1 from his reflexes, though, for each 5 mph difference in speeds between the two vehicles. Example: Your reflex roll was 5. Your driving skill adds 1, so your reflexes are 6 today. The target car is going 20 mph faster than your cycle. You must roll a 2 to make the jump. It's up to the referee what you do when you get there, and how long you can hang on. Good luck.

7. If your control table roll is successful (that is, you don't crash or skid), then you simply wind up going the new direction at the same speed. If you fail the control table roll, the result depends on your subsequent crash table roll(s).

–Steve Jackson

Star Viking

Dwarfstar Games has courteously supplied us with the following errata sheet for ***Star Viking****. (Congratulations on its shortness!)*

Errata to 1st Edition – 10/20/81

page 16

Carrying Cargo: local green units cannot be carried outside their original star system as cargo. If they are, the local unit is instantly destroyed. This is because locals have various racial types requiring various habitats, technologies, incompatible with each other and the Federation, and because their military equipment when carried elsewhere will lack the necessary maintenance supply, support, and command services for proper functioning. Locals that leave their system become ineffective and, therefore, are removed.

A number of other typographic errors exist, but these have no material effect on the play of the game; they will be corrected in a forthcoming revised 1st edition rules booklet.

Remedial Role Playing

by Aaron Allston and Ronald Pehr

Silent as a spectre, the martial artist, who had been running ahead as scout, moved from behind a concealing tree to stand before the party's leader.

"A large merchant caravan, maybe a mile ahead of us," he announced, grinning wickedly.

The party leader, a paladin of many years' experience, grinned back, greed evident on his handsome face. "Excellent. How armed? How many defenders?"

"Twenty men-at-arms and ten archers," the monk shrugged. "Chicken feed."

"Are any of them evilly aligned?" asked the Holy Father, fingering his mace. "Oh, never mind. In any event, I need to fund another curtain wall for my stronghold. Let's go."

Lances levelled and bows strung, the party of twenty-six charged to glory, butchering the defenseless caravan . . .

* * *

Yes, it sounds strange. It's stranger to watch as twentieth-level paladins, rangers, patriarchs, and other alleged lawful-goods plot the downfall of innocent merchants and their first-level guards. And it often happens, mainly because of misconceptions that beginning role-players (and some players not so new to the genre) are never broken of.

It's a circular process dating back to the original D&D rules. To become a better and richer character, you must get experience points; to get experience points, you must kill things; the more things you kill, the better you will be able to kill things. Oboy!

Only . . . something gets lost in that course of reasoning. The generic name for the product is *role-playing* games, but the role-playing aspect quickly vanishes if the game's only goal is to make your character a better and better killing machine. Eventually, the GM, maddened at the sight of the player-demigod-characters he has helped create, designs unfoilable death traps – unfairly killing characters and causing discouragement – or the players kill one platoon too many and decide the whole thing's a bore.

There *are* ways to break this cycle. They depend on the game master's initial work and encouragement, but once the players catch on, role-playing perpetuates itself.

In essence, the game master of any role-playing game must do three things to enhance role-playing in a campaign:

1) Create an interesting, coherent world (or galaxy, or whatever).
2) Give each character in the campaign a place in his world other than that of a homeless, wandering adventurer.
3) Create goals that the characters may wish to strive for (other than being able to topple Conan with a single blow).

T'aint easy! But it is worth it. Here are some techniques we have developed or experienced during several years of role-playing, which may enhance your campaign.

One: The Portfolio-World

Game masters who limit their players' adventures to descents into a single dungeon, with an occasional trip to the "Magic Shoppe," and no glimpses of the world around, are doing themselves and their players a disservice. If the only activity possible for people in a given region were the cleaning out of some gilded hole, it would have been done ages ago. The NPCs the characters hire must be going out wenching and pub-crawling in between adventures – and the characters themselves probably are, too.

It's really very easy for the GM to set up the world where the dungeon exists. Place the dungeon on a map, just a point on a blank sheet of hex-paper with a definite scale chosen by the GM. This marks the dungeon entrance; the dungeon itself, of course, is mapped out in larger scale. A few minutes' work will establish all the major towns, villages, or cities in the region, all the roads connecting them, the major rivers and lakes, mountains and canyons, and so on. History and politics can wait until needed; just set up an identifiable area to start.

A halfway-decent dungeon takes quite a while to explore; the characters will spend many an adventure in it, so they're likely to be in the immediate area for a while – presumably in the nearest town, city or encampment. A certain amount of work will be needed on that – major streets, public buildings, perhaps the basic political structure. That needn't be too extensive; after all, many people don't know much more than that about their own towns.

What's important is to let the town grow as the players explore it and live in it between dungeon runs. Ideas that flash into the GM's mind or are tossed off by players gradually expand the detail. *Keep records*! Keep them in a notebook, so they can be expanded and catalogued. Every time the players go somewhere in the town or surrounding area, or meet someone memorable, keep a note. A good campaign is consistent.

If the players go to different shops on the Street of Armorers, trying to get an appraisal on a possibly magic shield they've found, each shopkeeper will treat them differently. Some will give a curt analysis, some will offer to sell other things, some will try to cheat the players by offering to buy the shield for too little or sell something else for too much. If the players visit four different armorers, remember how each one treated the party with pertinent notes. The players will be back, and they'll have a sense of belonging in the world because the inhabitants will be familiar.

Conversely, the player-characters, if they meet with success while adventuring, will become familiar to the region's inhabitants. As the characters become known, the NPCs will treat them accordingly. The armorer will be friendly with a steady customer. A generous tavern patron will be well received by the tavern-keeper, while a troublemaker gets the bum's rush.

Here, role-playing becomes important. The NPCs become more than a collection of names on a map. Use *some* technique: Whisper connivingly, use accents and dialects, drool into your shoe, whatever is appropriate to the character. The players can't role-play unless the GM gives them some clues.

Two: Adventure Rationale

These techniques apply to the dungeons, as well. A dungeon has inhabitants. Why are they there? How do they behave? If they mindlessly attack, the players will respond in kind, and you are back to kill-da-monsters-get-da-loot. Sure, there are monsters that have no other modus operandi: The dungeon supply-house issue giant spider, 1 each, eats people, period – but even there you can allow some variety. Is it a trapdoor spider, lairing in the fallen crevices of a rotten dungeon floor? Does it have a web? How is it situated in regard to the other inhabitants of the dungeon? (It must eat other monsters; it couldn't possibly live solely on adventurers!)

What about the sentient inhabitants? Do they have contacts on the "outside"? What are they doing there anyhow? How do they protect themselves from the giant spider next door? They are as important to the logic of the campaign as the inhabitants of the nearby town. Sure, they're orcs! But why would they invariably, mindlessly attack kill-happy parties of adventurers? Orcs can negotiate, be bribed, bribe players, and can be clever enough not to obligingly run onto the +8 Spear of Orc-Slaying someone has along. If characters consistently attack for no reason, the intelligent monsters will run away and set traps – or shoot them in the back.

"Wilderness" adventures, taking place anywhere but a dungeon, are at least as interesting as dungeon treks. Note that most "wildernesses" aren't really very wild. Contrary to popular belief, the lands between dungeons and towns will be chock-full of laboring peasants, *not* griffins. If you must use random tables for outdoor encounters, be sparing and logical. Just because the chart says 3-12 wights doesn't mean that's the way you must game it; one wight may be quite enough to cause the party grief. And a wight, again, does not mindlessly attack. It might be the ghost of someone who died with a geas unfilled, and this could launch a whole new adventure, if properly played. Similarly, if you must use preconceived dungeons or adventures, such as the ones Judges Guild sells for many FRPGs, put them on your original map and find some reason for them to be as they are – tie them in to the rest of your world.

Three: Economics

Think hard on this one, folks: What are copper pieces for? They're not jewelry; they corrode too easily. They're certainly not *money,* most parties find them a nuisance. But they are listed as treasure on the tables; and there are hordes of NPC peasants around who would give limbs to get all the copper left behind by arrogant characters.

All too often, the character who managed to put his "starting money" towards one broadsword, a shield, a brigandine, and a helmet will survive one descent, and then be able to buy full plate armor, a warhorse and barding, his whole panoply.

If the economic system is such that copper money isn't worth the time it takes to pack it, or that a character can achieve third level and be set for life, then something is drastically wrong.

Keep the treasure low, keep prices high. If they want something, let them save up for it, or invest their money, or get generous patrons.

Four: Social Level

In most campaigns, the character has no presence beyond "That's Riblik, he's an adventurer, he's getting so rich it doesn't matter he's got no past or personality."

Just as your world should have a rationale, so should its characters. Giving a character social standing can encourage the player to develop the character's personality. Every civilization has a clearly defined place for each of its inhabitants. At the moment, he may be a landless, homeless wanderer. But he wasn't born an adventurer – he started life as a child. (Thank you, Bill Cosby.) That child grew up somewhere and had pre-game experiences. If the player knows what they were, he knows better how to act his character.

One way is to set up a social status chart: A character rolls for his place on the chart when he is first created, then rolls for improvement (if the culture allows) each time an experience level is gained or a well-publicized adventure is completed. A character, having rolled himself a place as a guardsman on the social chart, may decide that he's the personal bodyguard of the one who's rolled himself up a minor noble (presuming the latter agrees), creating a special interaction between the two.

At once, we have more goals other than killing and looting. The guardsman may be maneuvering to be promoted to guard-lieutenant or guard-captain. The character rolled as a squire may be gritting his teeth with every advancement roll, hoping he's earned the spurs of knighthood *this* time. There's no getting around it – a party composed of three fighters, two mages, a cleric and a thief is simply not as interesting as the band with the belted knight, the mercenary sergeant, the peasant warrior-in-training, the Guildmaster of the local College Arcane, the mountebank with his lightshow, the wandering father-confessor, and the lithe fellow who says he's a professional winemaker.

Just by deciding on a social strata, the GM will learn about the world he's created. If there are peasants and nobles, we have a feudal structure; if there are lots of merchants and tradesmen and artisans, then we have a rising middle class with more intercity trade and travel; if there are substantial numbers of mercenaries, then there are lots of wars for them to fight.

In medieval/fantasy milieus, all men are not created equal. Just as some characters start with high strength and others don't, then some will start with a silver spoon in their scabbards while others won't have a pot to – uh – make potions in. This *does* aid role-playing: The characters less favored by birth will be doing things to bring themselves up in the eyes of their peers, and those well favored will probably strive to maintain the status quo.

All the GM need do is decide which historical, legendary, or fantastic society most appeals to him, or make up his own. *Chivalry and Sorcery* presents an excellent

setting for a feudal world; you need not play the game to use the background. *Bushido* offers a Japanese milieu. Games such as *Traveller* and *Superhero 2044* give brief ideas about their social settings for the future; less explanation is needed, for the mores and institutions are closer to those of the 20th century.

Five: Secrecy

"Lemme see your sheet . . . Okay, so you're a fifth level assassin . . ." Now everyone knows all the salient facts about your character, simply because some oaf leaned over and buried his nose in your character record sheet. There's no excuse for this sort of thing. One of the most endearing things about fantasy is the mystery, curiosity, and often paranoia that exists between characters, as well as dramatic last-minute revelations about someone's abilities or goals.

Honestly, now – the average novice of the mystic arts will *not* be wearing robes printed with "First Level MU: Do not fold, spindle, or mutilate." Is it likely that passers-by would be able to catalog adventurers on scorecards: All magicians wear robes, all monks wear white cotton pajamas, all paladins have wings on their helms?

Characters will dress appropriately to the situation – what they are likely to face, what their social status allows, what they can afford, what image they wish to project. (It's not always wise to let everyone know you are a mage.) The average, unarmored character will probably wear tunic, breeches or hosen, boots, and belt, plus cloak and hat if there's rough weather or outdoor accommodations ahead. This can apply to mages, monks, nonviolent clerics (who *can* carry daggers for camping and eating – the medieval code that the rule is based on forbade them only to draw blood), thieves (whose surcoats can conceal leather armor), assassins (ditto), and so on. If these characters aren't color-coded by profession, why should all the players at the game table know all about them because they can see the character record sheet?

It becomes worthwhile to work up a character record sheet which shows on the front what others can see – clothing, equipment carried, weapons, etc. – but no more. The back side of the sheet gives class & level, spells and talents known, alignment, special nature of any extraordinary weapons, and so forth.

This leads to more character development, as people get used to playing their characters as others see them.

Remember, though, while you can't lie to the GM, it is perfectly permissible for players to lie to one another and to NPCs if they wish: "A thief? Who me?" "I am a Great and Powerful Wizard!" "This is a magic sword!" "This isn't a magic sword!" "My big brother is a 20th level Buttkicker; you better leave me alone!"

A character's motives may be hidden or only partially expressed. Example: In a world where magicians are ill-regarded, a novice mage is sent on a quest by his guildmaster to recover an enchanted item. The guild is in the pay of the Temple of Red Balloons. The novice garbs himself as an ordinary adventurer, perhaps as a suspected thief (the other characters see him struggling to "pick a lock" without realizing he's actually casting a Knock spell) and pretends to be interested in ordinary treasure-hunting. The adventure takes place in an area dominated by the Temple of Blue Safety Pins, which maintains a deadly feud with the

Red Balloonists. There's a lot that the novice will want to keep secret!

Conversely, there are times when the truth about the character – or a distorted truth – is better. Our novice mage might have to cow a group of low-class Blue Safety Pins by the dramatic revelation that he is not only a great and powerful wizard but also an officer of their feared enemies and will immediately kill and eat them if he doesn't get some instant cooperation!

Six: Talents

Abilities help develop personalities, but in D&D the only abilities usually available are those relevant to the character's profession. There are methods used in other games to provide abilities relevant to living in general, adventuring in particular, and not necessarily those usually practiced by a given profession. You can adapt talent rules from other games – TFT or *RuneQuest*, for example – or use D&D talent suggestions proposed in amateur publications, or make up your own system.

Having talents and skills in addition to "I fight," or "I cast magic," makes characters more interesting, and easier to play, since players may know more about real-world abilities than fantasy powers. Yes, you're aware that there's a mage among party members. But you're not sure he can't also pick pockets. Or swim. Or climb mountains.

One caveat: Do not permit characters to become all-wise. Encourage them to develop a limited number of abilities, rather than learning a very little about a lot of rubbish. And use logic: The King of the Wild Frontier, who's never even been in a city, probably can't pick locks, while the party vegetarian isn't likely to be a butcher, too.

Granting experience points for proper and clever talent use is helpful. Berserk slaughter is not the only way someone can become a refined and socially acceptable gentleperson.

Seven: This is *Your* World

Just because the rules say so, doesn't make it so. It is only when you say it is. The players have the rulebooks, too, and they'll take advantage of what the rules allow or use knowledge from the rules that the characters don't have. Well, it isn't the game author's world, it's yours. All lizardmen may not be evil, all undead might not be vulnerable to silver arrows, all clerics might not stick to blunt weapons. If you think something is more difficult or easier to do than the dice throw in the rules – so be it. If you think a dice roll is unneeded, don't use the dice; just allow the happening or forbid it. But be consistent thereafter.

Give experience points for *experience*, not mindless slaughter. A thief who is also a winemaker gets little credit for participating in the slaughter of a caravan, but should get many points for getting the caravan merchants drunk, then picking their pockets.

The main point is: make the game fit you, don't fit yourself to the game. It's your game, your world, and the rules are there to help you. The original D&D rules were presented as malleable guidelines. That's precisely how each subsequent RPG should be accepted, no matter what the designer intends. It's a *fantasy* game. Make it fantastic!

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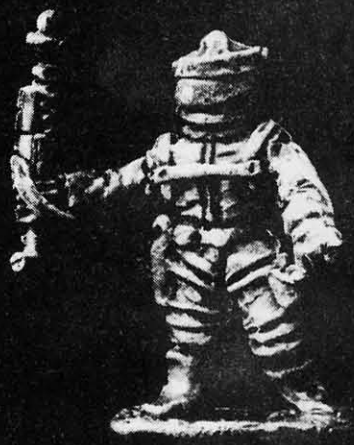

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I'm a Doctor, Not a . . .

by J. Andrew Keith

It is a sad fact that doctors, for TRAVELLER, tend to be NPCs kept around for the inevitable moment when someone needs to be patched up after a gun battle. In between, they are vague and shadowy creations, flitting at the edge of existence, usable only for such things as supplying drugs, interrogating prisoners, or reviving low berth transportees. Few characters like playing doctors; they don't get to use guns often enough. They grope around desperately with the other skills at their disposal, praying that they can be accepted in a group as computer operators or encyclopedia salesmen or *something* of more permanent use than medics.

Yet there are some great SF stories that involve medics. Dr. McCoy, of course, is well-known. Senior Physician Conway, from James White's excellent "Sector General" series is another medical hero. These men had medical expertise, and *used* it on a regular basis.

Some exciting TRAVELLER adventures could be patterned after these stories. Think of a delicate operation under dangerous conditions . . . a desperate attempt to isolate a plague before it claims the lives of adventurers . . . an attempt to diagnose – and treat – some hitherto unknown alien beastie, a treatment that could make quite a difference in the outcome of a campaign. But TRAVELLER makes little provision for this kind of adventure. Medical skill is too generalized to allow a character to really take advantage of medical adventuring possibilities. And this is the root cause of the unpopularity of such player-characters in TRAVELLER.

Earning Medical Skills

Medical skill is earned in TRAVELLER in a variety of ways. It appears as a result of rolls in the basic character creation charts of Book 1, and also in *Mercenary* and *High Guard*. *Citizens of the Imperium* includes a special "Doctor" career area. Returning to *High Guard*, we are briefed on medical school and how it works.

In order to cause the least damage to the TRAVELLER system while introducing these rules, we will make *no alterations* in the award of medical skill. All rules of whatever system you are already using will continue to apply.

Medical skill, however, changes in definition and application. The award of a level of Medical skill will now be treated much like the award of one of the more generalized skills, such as Gun Combat or Vehicle. When a level of Medical skill is obtained, it represents a general increase in the individual's knowledge of basic medicine, plus specific skill increases to be discussed below.

Types of Medical Skill

For the all-encompassing "Medical skill," we substitute a number of narrower skills:

First Aid: The individual has a knowledge of the treatment of emergency cases in the field.

First Aid skill functions very much like Medical skill always has; it is applied as a DM in attempts to stop bleeding, halt the spread of poison, revive a victim of heart failure or drowning, and similar life-saving techniques. First Aid skill does not assist in curing an ill . . . rather, it involves temporary action that will keep a patient alive until more skilled assistance is available.

Patient Care: The individual is trained in seeing to the needs of injured, sick, or otherwise incapacitated patients.

This skill is used in two basic areas: First, it is used as a DM when dealing with the long-term recovery of a patient. It represents the comfort and care which is available. Secondly, high levels of this skill should allow a favorable DM when a character with Patient Care skill assists in surgery or other treatment. Exact DMs should be the realm of the referee.

Pharmacy: The individual is trained in dispensing drugs.

A character with skill in Pharmacy would be most likely to succeed in preparing pills or other remedies. This would be of particular use if some kind of antidote or pharmaceutical is required for a specific malady, and must be mixed from available compounds. Individuals with this skill would also have more ready access to difficult-to-obtain drugs.

Cryology: The individual is trained in the preparation and revival of persons in cryogenic suspension (low berth).

This skill level is used instead of Medical skill when considering the revival of low berth patients. The level of skill is used directly as a DM in such cases.

Diagnosis: The individual has an extensive knowledge of diseases, and is capable of rendering an accurate opinion of the cause of a particular illness.

Diagnostic skill represents the ability of a character to determine what is wrong with a patient – the single most important factor in successful medical treatment. The referee should set a die roll, based on the rarity of the disease, the kinds of symptoms involved, and other factors. Diagnosis is used as a favorable DM when the doctor character attempts to determine what is wrong. Successful diagnosis allows treatment to proceed . . . unsuccessful diagnosis can leave the doctor baffled, or lead him to a wrong treatment that could well be disastrous.

Pathology: The individual is skilled in the detection of disease organisms.

This skill permits a doctor to have greater effectiveness when faced with a bacterial or viral disease. Unlike diagnosis, which focuses on symptoms, pathology deals with causes of diseases. Diagnosis would be useless in detecting an unknown pathogenic organism. Where such an organism is involved, use Pathology as a favorable DM in detecting its presence, and in finding ways of dealing with it.

Laboratory: The individual is trained in general laboratory techniques.

Laboratory skill is brought into play when research is required. It represents a knowledge of what tests to make, and how to interpret the results. If individuals with Laboratory skill are available, this should be applied as a DM to diagnostic or pathological researches.

Surgery: The individual is trained in surgical techniques.

While high dexterity is still an important criterion for successfully undertaking delicate surgery, a knowledge of anatomy, physiology, and other subjects is vital to the success of an operation. Where surgery is required, the referee should set die rolls for success or failure – preferably a series of such rolls to represent the crisis points of the operation. Some operations (appendectomies, for example), will be easier than others (brain surgery!); the number and difficulty of the die rolls will determine how complicated a particular operation will be. Surgical skill will be the most important die modifier for these operations, aided, perhaps, by modifications for high or low dexterity, skill of assistants, and other factors.

Exobiology: The individual is skilled in the treatment of persons of other races.

Possession of this skill would modify the rules given in the second edition of Book 1, where treatment of other species is mentioned. A patient of an alien race will suffer a DM-5 if the doctor treating has no Exobiology skill. Each level of Exobiology skill modifies the unfavorable DM by one; an expertise of Exobiology-5 would allow no unfavorable DM. These rules come into effect in all aspects of care – from first aid to surgery, and everything else covered in these rules.

Specialty: The individual is trained in some specialized form of medicine.

Specialty skills should be granted only at the discretion of the referee. Skill in a medical specialty would rarely find its way into the ordinary TRAVELLER game, but might occasionally be of use. Examples of specialties might include Neurology (study of nervous systems), Gerontology (study of aging), Endocrinology (study of glands and hormones), and a whole range of other ideas. They might prove useful as backgrounds to adventures (a player character who is carrying out research into aging might be interested in a hunt for an anagathic compound, for example). Patrons or NPCs might also possess specialty skills that could influence the course of the adventure.

How to Receive Medical Skills

Persons of Medical-1 expertise are unlikely to have skill in advanced medical techniques. Therefore, the earning of medical skill is limited as outlined below.

Medical-1+: First Aid, Patient Care, Pharmacy.

Medical-2+: Cryology, Laboratory, Pathology.

Medical-3+: Diagnosis, Surgery, Exobiology.

Medical-4+: Specialties.

Procedure: Each time a level of Medical skill is achieved, the character receives the chance to receive up to two specific medical skills. Skills are granted on the roll of 5+ on one die. The character (or the referee, if preferred) may choose what skill(s) to roll for; the same skill may be attempted twice.

Modifiers:

Characters with Intelligence 9+ may roll for three, rather than two, skills.

Characters with Education 9+ may add one to all die rolls.

Characters with a Dexterity of 10+ may add one when attempting to receive Surgery skill.

Titles For Characters With Medical Expertise

Characters who have received Medical-3 or higher may be considered Doctors, though in strict form, only those with recognized degrees (medical school graduates) should be so titled. Other job descriptions and titles, and the skill levels needed to earn them, are outlined below. Note that, in most cases, only one such title will be commonly used.

Paramedic: First Aid-3

Orderly, Medic: First Aid-2, Patient Care-1

Registered Nurse: First-Aid-1, Patient Care-3

Licensed Pharmacist: Pharmacy-3

Doctor: Medical-3 (any skills)

Surgeon: Medical-3, Surgery-1, Dexterity 8+

Characters with medical expertise are still highly specialized individuals, and many players will find them to be hard to play in contrast to the typical gun-happy Marine. But with the right referee, the right players, and some degree of separation for Medical skills and expertise, excitement and interest can be built in unusual areas, and adventures can be something more than before. Now the doctor who lacks experience in one area may suffer for that lack . . . a team of doctors together might be required to track down a baffling illness of plague . . . in all, more avenues for adventure are opened for everyone involved.

(And, if the doctor can gain Bricklaying-1, he can treat a Horta!)

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KILLER

In issue 43, we asked readers to come up with more science fiction weapon simulators for *Killer*. There were several interesting suggestions – and the best of all came in the form of a scenario, and wasn't even intended as a contest entry! But fair is fair . . . it arrived at the right time, it fit all the requirements, and it promises quite a bit of enjoyment. So first place goes to Stefan Jones of Locus Valley, NY (who was a runner-up in the Alien Race contest not long ago), for . . .

Demon with a Glass Hand

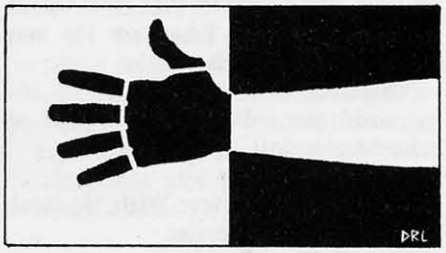
This *Killer* scenario is based on the teleplay by Harlan Ellison from the ancient "Outer Limits" sci-fi show. The story goes something like this: Earth has been invaded by the Kyben, weird humanoid aliens from another continuum. The entire human race has been "hidden" somehow, and the psychopathic Kyben want to find them so they can take possession of the earth once and for all. The secret of humanity's hiding place is stored in a crystalline computer shaped like a human hand, which has been grafted onto one of the last remaining humans. Unfortunately, the Kyben have stolen the fingers of the computer – vital to the hand's operation. The story details the efforts of the handbearer and a female assistant to retrieve the fingers and destroy the Kyben.

With a bit of reworking, DEMON WITH A GLASS HAND can make a challenging *Killer* scenario. There are two sides: the KYBEN team consists of five people, armed with futuristic weapons. The Kyben have one finger each (see below). To win, they must capture the Hand and keep at least four of the five fingers.

The Kyben have an Achilles heel: each wears a neck-band which holds the Kyben in our space-time. If this is removed, that Kyben vanishes in a puff of smoke. The bands can be simulated with a length of string and held around the neck by a paper clip.

The Kyben have a secret base containing their dimensional-gate. The Gate can be simulated by a poster-sized piece of paper with "GATE" painted on it, displayed on a wall somewhere. If the Human player can find and tear up the "Gate," the Kyben lose automatically. The Gate's location can be changed once during play.

The HUMAN team consists of two players (one male, one female) and one accomplice. The male player bears the HAND. This is simulated by wearing a glove with the fingers and thumb cut off. These are given to the Kyben team. The Hand has special powers that "even out" the two sides. These powers work only if the Humans hold the Hand.



At the beginning of the game, the Humans know who all five of the Kyben are. The Human players are anonymous at the beginning of the game – but after 24 hours of play, the Kyben are told who they are.

The Hand, and the fingers, never "automatically" go to the killer of their possessor – he must physically obtain them. However, if a player is killed and knows that none of his allies are in the immediate vicinity, his killer may ask for the item(s) he has and receive them freely.

Hand Powers:

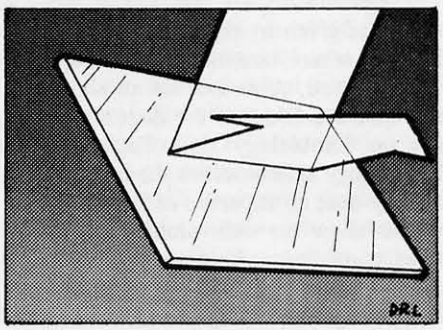
1. Once each day, plus one for each finger retrieved, the Hand can revive one of the human-team players. If the player with the Hand is killed, and it had a revival left, he comes alive again in one minute. He may run from the Kyben while "dead" to avoid being re-killed.
2. The Hand can answer one yes-or-no question per finger retrieved per day about the Kyben (i.e., is the Gate located in the college union?). These questions are answered by the GM, naturally.
3. The Hand can scan for Kyben in the immediate vicinity. This is simulated by having the accomplice patrol the area around the Handbearer. If the accomplice spots a Kyben, s/he can shout warning. The accomplice is "invisible": the Kyben can try to avoid her/him, but cannot legally kill/restrict the accomplice. Only one accomplice at a time may be used, but it may be a different accomplice at any time, to confuse the Kyben!

The Human team has only a few weapons available: knives, one gun, and their bare hands. A Human major victory is accomplished by killing off all of the Kyben and retrieving all of the fingers. Killing off the Kyben without possession of the Hand and at least two fingers is a draw.

* * *

Second place (6 issues) goes to Jeffrey Katz of Riverside, CA, for a simple and effective weapon:

RAY GUN (Class A). This is simulated by a standard military signalling mirror; flash it in your foe's eyes and he dies. Advantages are relatively long range and (with practice) good accuracy. Disadvantages: it only works outdoors on a sunny day, and at long ranges your victim may not realize he is dead unless you zap him repeatedly.



Mr. Katz writes that he has never played *Killer* and probably never will . . . which is a pity, but maybe just as well for the rest of you in California! This is a lovely weapon simulator; simple, cheap, and perfectly safe. It would be hazardous if used against someone driving a moving vehicle – but, needless to say, that's totally against the rules to start with.

* * *

Honorable mentions go to the following three killers. We've taken liberties with the details to improve playability, but the ideas were excellent!

THE BORE WORMS (Class A). These are alien creatures of obnoxiously parasitic nature. Their usual state is dormant and dessicated; heat or pressure activates them and they attack any nearby mammal. Represent them by strands of spaghetti, which can be placed in a chair, bed, or whatever. If rested upon and/or broken, they immediately burrow into the victim and anyone else within a three-foot radius. The attack takes place almost instantly; once they enter a victim, worms become satiated and will not attack those who approach the bodies. (*M.T. Moore, Ft. Bragg, N.C.*)

HYPNOTIC SOLUTION (Class A). A little ketchup or vaseline in the palm of your hand (you, as the user, are presumed immunized) represents this drug. The victim is not killed – but, for the next thirty minutes, he is totally under your power. Uses abound! Four possibilities:

1. Tell the victim to go kill himself.
2. Tell the victim to go kill someone else!
3. Tell the victim to go bring you some specific desired item.
4. Pump him for information; he must cooperate fully.

The victim may not attack his master, or reveal that he is controlled, for the full thirty minutes. Once that time is up, he reverts to normal state with full memory of all that has taken place. (*Kevin Sweeny, Bettendorf, Iowa*)

Dennis Beiting (*Farmington, Mich.*) suggests that a wrist watch can be used to simulate a forcefield (the rules don't say what to use) by specifying which settings indicate different sorts of fields. Take it one step farther (or backwards) and any watch may be used. The GM may specify that red tape on a watch-face means a shield of one variety; blue tape, another; and so on.

Thanks for the entry; keep those cards and letterbombs coming.

–Steve Jackson

CONTEST

"You're in a square room, about 20 by 20. The walls are of brick; there are no obvious doors other than the one you came in by. There's nothing in the room except dust and leaves."

"We examine the walls closely. What do we see?"

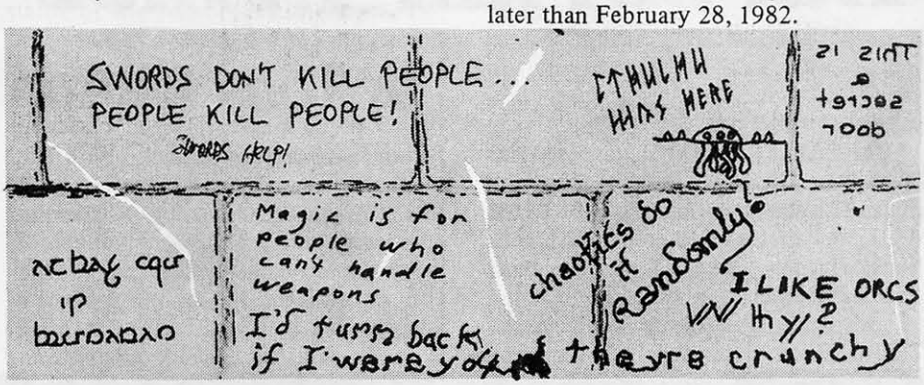
"No secret doors. However, on the west wall, there's some writing. You recognize it as Elvish."

"I speak some Elvish. What does it say?"

"It's faint, but you can puzzle it out. It says," (a pause for effect), " 'Oberon Is A Fairy!' "

We should be ashamed of ourselves for stooping to this month's contest. We're not. The challenge: Send us a sample (not more than a dozen) of the graffiti you think most appropriate for dungeon walls. A few suggestions are below . . . we have no doubt our readers will soon fill the wall with their own.

All entries will become the property of SJ Games. First place will win a 12-issue subscription to TSG; second place will win a 6-issue subscription. We reserve the right to award fewer (or no) prizes if no entries of publishable quality are received. Entries must be postmarked no later than February 28, 1982.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Featured Review:
Barbarian Prince
by Tony Watson

BARBARIAN PRINCE, one of Heritage's new Dwarfstar line, is a solitaire game. The player assumes the guise of Cal Arath, a barbarian prince of the Northlands Kingdom, whose father has been slain by usurpers to the throne. It is the prince's quest to journey south of the Tragoth River in search of allies and the fortune necessary to regain his birthright.

The system used in BARBARIAN PRINCE is a cousin to the programmed adventures that have become popular for many fantasy role-playing games. However, since the handy channeling device of a labyrinth is not present, the final effect is more akin to SPI's groundbreaking *Voyage of the Pandora.* In very simple terms, the system uses die rolls to generate a range of events, based on character actions and location.

The overall effect of the paragraph system is very pleasing. The flow of the game can work out like a piece of fiction. The critical difference is the player can influence the plot by making decisions at key junctures.

Cal Arath has formidable combat ability and endurance, which are constant at the start of each game, and a randomly determined "wit & wiles" factor, which functions as an intelligence rating. A starting hex on the north side of the map is determined randomly as the game begins.

Each game turn represents one day and a track is provided for marking weeks and days. The prince has ten weeks to

Designer's Notes

by Arnold Hendrick

BARBARIAN PRINCE is a fantasy solitaire game, and thus commonly compared with the "solo dungeons" of Flying Buffalo and similar firms. Actually, BARBARIAN PRINCE was based on microcomputer adventure games and SPI's highly rated *Voyage of the BSM Pandora*. Although BARBARIAN PRINCE was designed after the latter, and profited from SPI's errors, the popularity of the design and system was unknown. Right up to publication, sentiment inside Heritage was very mixed about the reception for BARBARIAN PRINCE – solitaire games in the past had done poorly for many firms.

The game has two aspects that help account for its popularity. First, the integration of the rules with events makes it easier to learn. As you read an event, appropriate rules sections are referenced, so you can learn the rules as you play. Actually, in the first day ("turn") of the game, you'll probably learn half the rules anyway. However, the other half can be ignored for a while, which makes learning easier.

The second aspect is the "multi step" process for resolving situations. Typically the prince runs into an event, is presented with options (such as evading contact, talking, or fighting), and then rolls a die after selecting an option. The result sends the player to an "intermediate" paragraph where additional options or die rolls set up an actual combat or escape situation, or some similar result. Thus, a single event can mushroom into hundreds of possible outcomes, virtually eliminating any chance of a "perfect plan" or single strategy to victory. From a design standpoint, the trick is to make the results of these events contribute to victory, but only over the long term. The usual error of designers using this system (especially in microcomputer applications) is to provide too direct a path to the "winning result."

The map, events, characters, etc., in BARBARIAN PRINCE were all taken from fantasy literature. This starts with Tolkein and Howard, and has been varied in many directions by literally hundreds of contemporary writers. Silliness or pure randomness is avoided: the game must seem believable and realistic. As a designer, I demand this and believe BARBARIAN PRINCE delivers.

BARBARIAN PRINCE is not advertised as a super difficult game, but it is very difficult to win. In fact, just staying alive is quite a challenge. Fortunately, a high mortality rate among princes appears to challenge players – most go back to try again, and again, and again. The initial (since revised) edition of the game made sacrifices and audiences at temples a popular road to victory. This is still worth investigating, but the most attractive rewards now come from a successful audience at Drogat or Aeravir castles – which requires a trek across the mapboard, and then back again. Of course, the Prince might collect enough loot in lucky events, but in the game (as in life) it is easier to spend money than to acquire it! Regardless of what objective a prince fastens upon, finding friends and hirelings is helpful, and some useful information can be picked up in towns and temples (although lengthy stays can get expensive). A player who simply wanders about the countryside aimlessly, hoping that victory will appear before him by magic, is in for a rude surprise! The inclusion of seeking tables (r209-212) in the rules booklet was a deliberate hint to

complete his quest. Depending on the type of hex he and any followers begin in, the prince can undertake one of a variety of actions. In wilderness and rural areas, the party can rest and heal wounds, move to any new hex, or search for previously cached items. In settled areas, such as towns, castles, and temples, activities include hiring followers, seeking an audience with the local lord or making an offering at the altar.

Movement is the most common action. The cardstock game map portrays seven types of terrain in a very vivid manner; the map graphics are exceptional. A travel table gives characters a die roll chance to get lost. Being lost prevents movement out of the hex. The prince sometimes seems to be lost for an inordinate length of time, putting a drag on the game. There is also a keyed number for an event in that terrain; die rolls determine the exact nature of the event, which can run from adverse weather and attacks by wild beasts to discoveries of tombs and caves and encounters with warriors and wizards.

The events which occur during travel, or as the result of encounters in towns and castles, provide the substance of the game. In most encounters, especially those with intelligent creatures, the prince usually has a number of options to choose from. For example, event paragraph 71 indicates that an elven band has been encountered. The prince can opt to talk with them, attempt to evade them, or fight them, rolling on the appropriate table. A new paragraph will be referred to, indicating situations ranging from the elves joining the prince's cause to their immediate attack on his party.

The game system allows for logical and meaningful attempts to negotiate with characters encountered. Very often, the prince's wit and wiles rating will play an important factor in these interactions. Sooner or later, combat will occur. The combat system is relatively simple. The combat ratings of the participants are compared, with the difference acting as an addition to the better fighter's dice roll and as a subtraction from the weaker's. Additional modifiers are used for wound status of the striker and his target. The final result is compared to a table, which lists the number of wounds the target takes. Wounds are applied to the target's endurance. When reduced to an endurance of one, the character is unconscious, and if reduced to zero, he is dead. Combat dice rolls are not simultaneous, so striking first is a decided advantage. So is surprise, which is allowed in some situations. Surprise gives the attacker a free round of attacks and first strike in all subsequent rounds.

BARBARIAN PRINCE is a good game, basically sound and entertaining, but it does have a few glitches. Some typos and misdirections have crept into the events booklet. There are a couple of instances where the player is referred to the wrong paragraph, or the text of the paragraph is not quite as explanatory as one would prefer. However, these can be overlooked; the problems that cropped up in my games were easy to rectify. As previously mentioned, I found that the rules for getting lost should be loosened a bit. Finally, there is the question of "balance" (not an entirely appropriate term to apply to a solitaire game): In the dozen or so games I played, Cal Arath achieved his quest only once and very often died early, falling prey to a pack of wolves or a group of giant spiders before ever really getting started.

BARBARIAN PRINCE's good points far outweigh the bad. It's a well-structured and interesting game, and challenging play for the gamer who has no opponent and is seeking a few hours' diversion.

BARBARIAN PRINCE (Heritage); $4.95. Designed by Arnold Hendrick. One 12" x 14" full-color map, one 25mm metal figurine, one 24-page rulebook, one 48-page event book, two informational sheets, and two dice. 1 player; playing time about two hours. Published 1981.

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princes, a suggestion that they acquaint themselves with the probable roads to victory.

Of course, in a game with so many random probabilities, there exists a microscopic chance that a string of coincidences will produce a win. For example, one prince didn't even leave the Northlands to win! Instead, he rooted around in the ruins of Jakor's Keep (where he happened to start), and by a chain of rare circumstance ended up with the Royal Helm of the Northlands (e194) and instantly won. Needless to say, when he tried this in the next game, the result was simply an early demise at the hands of the Mercenary Royal Guardsmen (e002).

A number of freelance designers have asked how I created such a convoluted game system. It simply requires good organization, like any other game. The first step is to outline the main procedures of the game. In this case, the daily actions and game map were done, and then fleshed out with outlines of the combat system, travel mechanics, etc. Finally, a "master chart" for travel events was prepared, showing all terrain types, die rolls, and the results (by title). Later event numbers were assigned, specific events written, and the master chart split into two segments for easier reference (now r207 and r231-280 respectively).

Then the actual game text, both rules and events, were written. Before the large number of travel events could be written, the basic talk-evade-fight option system was set up and the range of "intermediate" results (r300-343) written. When an event was written, an appropriate range of results could be "plugged in" from the group of pre-existing intermediate paragraphs. Finally, the special events and options (r209-212, e180-194, etc.) were written. Again, when a range of results was possible, an outline or list was prepared first, then the specifics conjured forth.

In retrospect, it would have been better to create the game-winning events and situations first (in this case, audiences, sacrifices, etc.) and then the more mundane events. This allows one to better judge the relative difficulty of the player's task, since you know from the start what must be done to win. On the other hand, it also allows you to sometimes add a trivial treasure or result that causes victory (such as the Royal Helm of the Northlands, e194).

Game design and publishing is a business, and cost effectiveness *does* apply. If a minor aspect of the game consumes a large amount of space, and yet adds very little to the game as a whole, it is not cost effective. In BARBARIAN PRINCE the rules and events built around airborne travel are probably not cost effective. Pegasus mounts are just too rare to deserve the detailed treatment given. They should have been eliminated, or made more common. On the other hand, the raft travel rules and events are just about right – raft travel is rather uncommon, but little detail is devoted to it, so the balance comes out "about right" in the trade off.

In the future, more solitaire games on fantasy and science fiction can be expected in the Dwarfstar line. BARBARIAN PRINCE went "over budget" on components. However, through an expanded and more sophisticated use of intermediate paragraphs, a game of greater variety and challenge can be produced, while the combined text fits into just one 48-page rules booklet. Metal tokens and color maps will probably remain a feature of Dwarfstar solitaire games for a while to come. Look for the next Dwarfstar releases in the spring of 1982.

Incidentally, Heritage is looking for freelance designers to contribute to the Dwarfstar line, both in solitaire games, and in traditional 2-player games. For information on procedures and parameters, write Arnold Hendrick, Publishing Director, Heritage USA, 14001 Distribution Way, Dallas, Texas, 75234-3496.

Official Errata

r209. Dice roll results for '4' and '5' should be interchanged, dice roll result '9' should refer to e050, and dice roll result '11' should reference rule r218 for escape.

r210. Dice roll result '12' porters have combat skill 1, endurance 2.

r212. Dice roll result '12' should be '12, 13,' while dice roll result '13 (or higher)' should read '14 (or higher)' instead.

r215. In r215c, a dice roll result of '6' should reference e050, with two added (+2) to the die roll in that event.

r219. In the last paragraph of this rule, fourth line, the reference to combat r220 should be r306 instead.

r220. In strikes (r220c), when facing multiple opponents, a character can strike at only one each round, but can select which one to strike against. Example on the next page is wrong: the Dwarf should roll a '10' and with modifiers result in an '8' to inflict one wound.

e013. Raid result: Combat reference in second line should be to r306. The fight against the family itself (if you get that far) should have a reference to r305 to set up the combat situation for that.

e016. Friendly Approach: Magician is combat skill 3, endurance 5 (in case he joins your party).

e018. Die roll result of '1' with 'fight' choice should lead to 'surprise r301.' In note, die roll for desertion due to mark of Cain is made with just one die.

e032. Die roll result 'e-3041' should read '3-e041.'

e048. Introductory paragraph is completely wrong. It should read:

You encounter a person trying to avoid local justice. He or she will join your party as an ally, but will desert whenever you encounter any Constables (unless your party elects to fight them, and kills all), or whenever you enter any town, castle, or temple. Instead, you can immediately elect to fight the character encountered, see r300. Roll one die to see exactly who you meet:

e056. Second paragraph is misplaced; ignore it completely; this event is solely contained in the first paragraph.

e067. Die roll result 'e-3046' should read '3-e046.'

e076. In second paragraph, second line, reference to victim selection should be r343, not r143.

e085. If you fall and survive your wounds (second paragraph), roll one die to see if your party finds you.

e116. The eagle who joins is combat skill 4, endurance 3.

e121. All characters recover from sunstroke at the evening meal.

e137. Die roll result '4-e056' should be '4-e055.'

e155. Die roll result of '4,' if you agree to make offerings, you only add two (+2) to dice roll on r212; do not add three.

Other typographic errors exist, but do not affect the play of the game. A revised first edition booklet is in preparation.

WE PUT THIS AD TOGETHER AT THE LAST MINUTE TO TELL YOU ABOUT THE OPTIONAL BASES FOR . . .

CARDBOARD HEROES

STEVE JACKSON GAMES

The only problem with having a brand-new product is that it can mess up your magazine schedule if you wait for the ads to be made up. So we didn't wait.

Anyway: As the name implies, these are plastic bases designed to hold our Cardboard Heroes miniature figures. They are "optional" because you don't have to have them – the Heroes stand up perfectly well by themselves. But the bases make them more stable and better-looking. And they come in two colors – black and white – so you can color-code your figures.

The photo above was taken by Steve Jackson. As a photographer, Steve is a pretty good game designer. Next time this ad runs, there will be a better photo or none at all! But it does give you a good idea what they look like.

Each set of bases provides enough material for one full set of human-sized Heroes. Some sets, like the Animals (Set 4) and the giants we're planning to release next year, will require a few extra bases.

The bases sell for $3.00 per set in your hobby shop. If you can't find them, we'll sell them by mail for $3.50 – this covers postage and handling. TSG subscribers can still get them by mail for just $3.00.

Kimberani's Tomb

This D&D adventure was originally prepared by David Ladyman as a tournament dungeon for TexCon: 1981. It has been slightly modified for campaign play. It works best with five characters, of about 4th level.

Italicized portions of the text should be read directly to the players by the DM. The remainder is for his information.

The five of you, nodding acquaintances, have each recently come into possession (legally or otherwise) of a piece of parchment covered with pictographs, a different graph entitling each one. You have each taken your sheet to your local sage, Darris. Fortunately, he says, he is just back from Musr, the land of these pictographs. In fact, he brought a talking beast back with him, an expert in that land's history, to fill in some additional information and translate a few more manuscripts. He will have your parchments translated, for a price, of course.

About a week later, Darris summons each of you back, and you find yourselves in a secret meeting with the sage and a cat-like, cat-sized winged creature with an urchin's face, its fur beginning to shade black, posed on the desk before Darris. Despite its small size, it somehow manages regal poise.

Having already collected his price from each of you, the sage hands out a translation to each of you; you identify your own by the pictograph title which headed your original parchment. That translation is at the bottom of your character sheet.

He tells you that the final pictograph in each case is that of Kimberani, a most powerful king who died 100 years back. He tells you that he thinks there is some significance to the parchments all appearing at once – he senses danger to many people, and he would be interested in the group of you following up on this lead. From what he can tell, your party will have to travel Kimberani's Path to do this. Information is his stock in trade – in exchange for the tale of your journey and news of what you discover, he will fund your trip to Musr, to Kimberani's Tomb. This is good, because you haven't the price between you for a trip to the tavern and back. He will let his expert, Kurna, fill in a few details. The cat gives a slight nod and says:

"Kimberani made a serious effort to rid Musr of all evil magic – of course the task was essentially impossible, but such a powerful wizard was he that he was actually making headway. He was also, however, working to ensure himself of a pathway to and a place among the gods. He had steeped himself sufficiently in arcane matters to realize that, regardless of what the common folk thought, it took positive effort to achieve godhood.

This division of energy was his eventual downfall. Certain of the gods had given him emblems of power to accomplish his work, yet they began to oppose him when they realized he had in mind a home in their jealously guarded haven. In fact, each god set a minion along the path Kimberani was constructing, to hinder him from using it. Of course, this could be difficult, since it is rumored that any of these emblems of power is in itself capable of warding or controlling any minion of the god bestowing it. In fact, it is possible that they are the **only** *means of defending oneself on the path. This action of the Gods turned Kimberani bitter, and he began to dabble in the black magic he had become familiar with. In his climactic battle with Mushiy'a, a chaotically evil wizard, he was killed, and Mushiy'a himself was tremendously weakened. The emblems remain unclaimed, and were supposedly buried with the king."*

When the small Kurna finishes speaking, Darris adds that it's not a good idea to be caught with a map to the tomb – discovery of such a map is sufficient to hang you for tomb robbing among the sometimes suspicious folk of Musr. He has a suggestion, which will help him out as well – he has finished with Kurna's services and the small sphinx needs to return home. Kurna will guide you to the Royal

Compound in exchange for escorting him back home, to Musr. Darris gives your party a small bag containing 10 small diamonds, saying, with a wink: "I will pay your expenses – save these until you know when to use them."

The sage books passage for you – you cross the sea, sail up a delta past the capital, Alkahira, and arrive at an ornate river landing. You disembark on the bustling west bank and immediately notice a triangular point rising behind some hills in front of you. Kurna turns to you, saying, "This causeway in front of you has no branchings – follow it straightly and you will arrive at Kimberani's Valley.

"This fulfills our original agreement, yet I have another to propose. There will be more pictographs in the tomb – all royal tombs have them – and you will want their meaning. I, on the other hand, desire diamonds. They form an exquisite part of my diet. Unfortunately, diamonds are usually hidden where a cat, even a particularly intelligent sphinx, has trouble reaching them. My bargain is this: One diamond for each translation. No more, no less."

(Kurna will not negotiate.)

Kurna

Kurna looks exactly like a juvenile androsphinx. He is AC0, 8 HTK. He fights as a 2 hit die monster, with no magical abilities. He does 1d6 per attack.

Kurna will dodge every fight, pleading lack of hit points, and suggesting that the party will need him later to translate. He will never have to make a saving throw, unless someone in the party attacks him.

In fact, Kurna is Mushiy'a's familiar. If Kurna is killed, reduce Mushiy'a's hit points by 16. If Kurna survives Mushiy'a, he will try to avenge his master, fleeing when he has killed whomever put in the final blow on Mushiy'a.

The Slavers

The causeway is about 10 feet wide. It passes through about ½ mile of lush farm land. (The corn is as high as an elephant's eye.) After that, the ground slopes up, and the causeway continues through dry, desert terrain.

Just as the fields give out, the party will be ambushed by slavers. They are all fighters, neutral evil in alignment. Their stats:

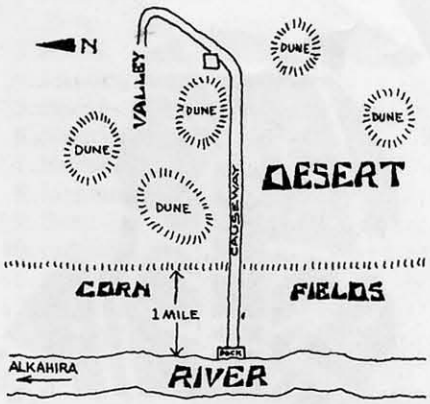
	AC	HTK
1.	5	25
2.	8	3
3.	8	5
4.	8	8
5.	8	4
6.	10	2
7.	10	10
8.	8	12
9.	10	5

No. 1 is the chief. He is 3rd level, and carries a longsword. No. 8 is the subchief. He is level 2, and his weapon is also a longsword. All the other slavers are level 1, and they carry shortswords.

Only numbers 1-7 actually participate in the ambush. The other two are about 50 feet away, guarding the horses and the wereleopard. If the wereleopard yells a warning, roll for initiative; otherwise, the party is surprised. The slavers will fight until the chief or five other slavers are dead. The only exception is no. 9, who will flee if the subchief is killed. The weapons of the slavers cannot hurt the wereleopard while he is in animal form, but they will hack at him anyway. Afterwards, the wereleopard will join the party, if they tell him they are trying to recover the emblems of Kimberani.

All of the slavers' treasure is on their two horses. The horses will permit any human to approach them, but will flee if the wereleopard comes near. In that case, only the wereleopard is fast enough to catch them, and the only way he can stop them is by killing them. If he kills one, the other will escape.

One horse carries 37 g.p., 270 s.p., and 10 weeks of rations. The other has 23 g.p., 265 s.p., a tinder box, and a silver cat head, sacred to Bast. It will take the wereleopard about 10 minutes to catch and kill one of the horses.



The Causeway

Tournament Characters

Race	Class	Level	Align.	AC	HTK	STR	INT	WIS	DEX	CON	CHR	Armor	Weapons
Human	Cleric	4	LG	4	32	15	14	14	13	13	12	Chain, Shield	+1 Lucerne Hammer, Flail
Human	Fighter	4	LG	4	40	16	11	11	14	14	15	Chain, Shield	+1 Bastard sword, Mace, Dagger
Human	Paladin	4	LG	3	40	14	9	15	15	10	18	Banded	+1 2-Handed Sword, Shortsword
Human	Thief	4	NG	7	24	13	12	12	15	14	12	Leather	+1 Longsword, 3 Daggers
Human	MU	4	CG	8	16	9	15	13	10	13	12	Bracers of Defense, AC8	+1 Staff, Dagger

Equipment: Besides the listed weapons, the party has divided among its members 3 packs, 5 waterskins, 5 weeks' iron rations, 5 large sacks, 5 tinder boxes, 7 torches, two 50' ropes, one 10' pole, 5 vials of holy water, 5 iron spikes, 1 potion of extra-healing, and 5 potions of healing.

Weapon Proficiency: Besides the weapons they carry, the cleric can use a staff; the fighter, a longbow or crossbow; the paladin, a longbow, crossbow or mace; and the thief, a shortbow. The MU does not have proficiency for the dagger he carries.

Spells: The MU knows Burning Hands, Dancing Lights, Detect Magic, Hold Portal, Magic Missile, Protection From Evil, Shield, Shocking Grasp, Sleep, Unseen Servant (1st Level), Audible Glamour, Continual Light, Invisibility, Knock, Mirror Image, Pyrotechnics, Rope Trick, Scare, Strength, and Web (2nd Level). The cleric can use any of the standard spells.

Scheherezade

The causeway slopes gradually upward for two miles, before descending into Kimberani's Valley. The country is quite arid; here and there one sees low hills of sand. Just as the pyramid comes in sight, the players will notice a low, 10' x 10' stone pedestal near the road. As they approach, a large, tawny form leaps up onto the pedestal. They see a magnificent feline form, with a woman's beautiful bust and face, every man's dream, as long as he doesn't mind the sharp teeth and flexed claws. Stretched out in the classic sphinx pose, 9' tall at the shoulder, she asks, "Who walks the Royal Causeway?" After the reply, she says, "Visitors from afar! We receive few from across the sea in these days. And a little he-sphinx with you! Well, you know the usual toll for passage – the answer to my riddle. Else you forfeit your lives. My riddle is:

"Friend of the farmer,
Beloved of the fisher,
Musr is my gift to Man.
Who am I?"

If no one can think of the solution, Kurna answers, "The Nile." ("The river" is close enough.) If one of the players (not Kurna) solves the riddle, Scheherezade will say, "Very good! The entrance you seek leads down and to the south."

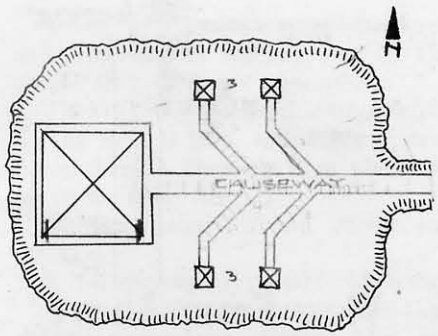
Scheherezade is a mature gynosphinx, 96 HTK. She will not have to attack unless the party elects to fight or run. If they fight, she will kill the most obnoxious character first, then start on the others. If they run, she will kill the hindmost and let the others go. She will stop fighting if the party tries to negotiate again.

Scheherezade prefers claw fighting to using magic. Her treasure is in a pit behind the pedestal: 15 gems and a potion (of blue dragon control).

Kimberani's Valley

The valley is as shown. It is surrounded by steep, 200' cliffs. The great pyramid is 300' on each side. The smaller pyramids are 20'. (Both Kurna and the wereleopard know that Kimberani had three daughters and a stillborn son.) For practical purposes, the smaller pyramids are solid stone.

There is an entrance 30' from the ground on the north side of the great pyramid. It is a 4' x 4' hole, not obvious from the ground. It slopes downwards at 30 degrees. After 200', there is a rough chamber, 10' cubical. There is only one obvious entrance to the chamber, but if the party searches for secret doors, they will find a 2' diameter plaster patch on the west wall. This covers the entrance to



The Valley

a crawl space.

However, before the party can investigate the crawl space . . .

The Hobgoblins

Suddenly, five hobgoblins knock a hole in the south wall and immediately attack. They have chainmail and longswords. Their hit points: 9, 8, 7, 7, 6. They cannot hurt the wereleopard, but will hack at him anyway.

The hobgoblins also have 2 back packs, 2 small sacks, 50' of rope, some garlic, 5 weeks of iron rations, 4 pints of cheap beer, 5 parchments with very familiar pictographs, and a bag of holding with 5 g.p. and 5 s.p.

Only two hobgoblins can fight the first round; all can attack thereafter. As the fight ends, the tunnel the hobgoblins came through will collapse. The rubble is completely impassable.

Once the hobgoblins have been disposed of, further searches of the rough room will reveal a small (1' x 1') secret compartment on the east wall. It will take two searches to find the secret compartment, *after* the plaster patch has been discovered. Inside are one lantern (empty), and four flasks of oil.

The Crawl Space

The crawl space appears to have been designed as an obstacle course for a demented python. It goes 10' west, then 10' north, up 20', south 15' and down 10'. Then it dead-ends. However, if one kicks

The Nonhuman

In the tournament, a wereleopard joins the adventurers. It may be used as an NPC in a campaign scenario, or another character may be substituted. Its characteristics: STR 13, INT 12, WIS 14, DEX 14, CON 13, CHR 11. The wereleopard is a 4th level, chaotic good fighter. It has 40 HTK.

The wereleopard is AC3, but only AC 10 while in human form. It takes one full melee round to change form, and takes 5 hits if it changes while wearing armor. As a leopard, it can make three attacks a round – one bite (1d12) and two claws (1d4) – or it can rake with both claws. A raking attack does 1d4+1 and is +3 to hit with each claw. It is not possible to rake and make another attack on the same round.

As a human, the wereleopard has proficiency with sword, sling, longbow, shortbow, and spear. Like most lycanthropes, it is not affected by normal weapons while in animal form.

Information for Nonhuman

You are a mature black wereleopard. You are a devotee of Bast, the Cat Goddess. You have been captured by a band of Ishmaelite slave-traders. You are handcuffed, in brief clothing. You were a fighter charged with the safe-keeping of your goddess' temple. You "allowed" it to be defiled when you were captured, and you must cleanse yourself by courage and good deeds. All of your fellow slaves have already been sold. The Ishmaelites kept you, because they sensed something special about you (although they don't know what). You know a fair amount of local lore, but are not literate in hieroglyphs. You were knocked unconscious at the beginning of the temple raid, before you could change into a leopard. You think you could get out of your handcuffs, especially if you were in leopard form. You are on foot. There are nine slavers, with two pack-horses. The pack-horses (which won't come anywhere near you – they know what you are) are laden with the slaver's profits.

The chief is in chain, the sub-chief is in leather. Four henchmen are in leather, three are not armored.

A party of five is spotted. The chief and six others set up an ambush in the cornfields at the edge of the desert, leaving the subchief and one other to guard you and the horses about 50 feet away, crouched in the fields.

The slaver with you has no armor; the subchief is AC8. The subchief has a longsword, the slaver a shortsword. You are lying on the ground.

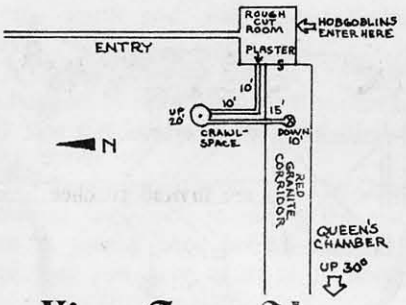
out the bottom of the crawl space (another plaster plug), he finds it is in the ceiling of a 10' x 10' east-west corridor. The walls are of red granite. Descending, one sees the corridor slopes down 30 degrees for 10 feet to the east, and up for 40 feet to the west. The east wall is blank, but in the west he can see something reflecting his torchlight . . . maybe gold?

The crawl space will be difficult for anyone but the thief to traverse. Shields will not fit at all, except in the bag of holding. (And if the DM is being impartial, they may never discover it is a bag of holding.)

Careful mapping will show the corridor has a common wall with the rough room. There is a secret door, but it is exceptionally well-hidden, and it is Wizard Locked. To find the secret door from the rough room, a Knock spell must be cast. Next, the wall must be searched three times (or twice for the thief). The other side of the door is not so well hidden, though, and the thief can find it on the first try.

The Queen's Chamber

The granite corridor ends in a 15' x 20' chamber. The walls are red granite, and the room is full of multicolored, gauze



View From Above

veils, hanging from golden rings. To the right is another entrance, with a corridor leading up.

There are more inscriptions in the room, which Kurna can translate. One which appears on either side of the entrances says, "His/Happy, Good, Beautiful/Heart, Desire, Wish." This is the name of Queen Nef-nefer-ab, Kimerani's wife.

On the north and south walls, near the entrances, appears the sign, "Doorway of Fragmented Paths." Opposite each end of the sarcophagus is the sign, "Guardian Avenger."

The room is crowded with objects:

Sarcophagus. Alabaster, 3½' high, 8' long. There is a seal on either end. If anyone touches a seal, a hidden Magic Mouth will say, "I wouldn't break that seal . . . If you do, my friends will avenge me, yes they will!"

If a seal is broken, Kurna will leave the room and a djinn will appear, creating a whirlwind that does 2d6 damage to everyone in the room. Then, it will vanish. The Magic Mouth will say, "My little fools, I warned you to leave my body alone! That was a naughty thing to do!"

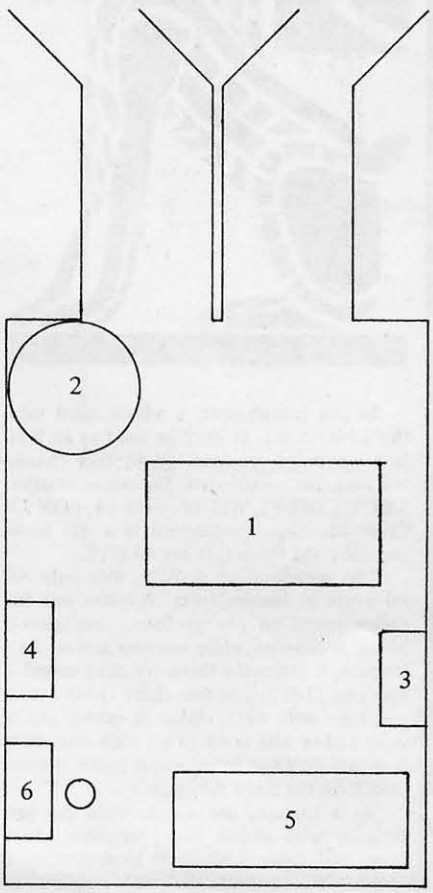
If the second seal is broken, a second djinn will appear, as before. If the sarcophagus is tampered with again, both djinni will appear, fighting until they have driven the party out of the room. One djinn has 36 hit points, the other 39.

Keg. Iron, 5' high. This is an apparatus of Kwalish. There is a secret catch which opens a hatch on the bottom side. There is no way to get it out of the room.

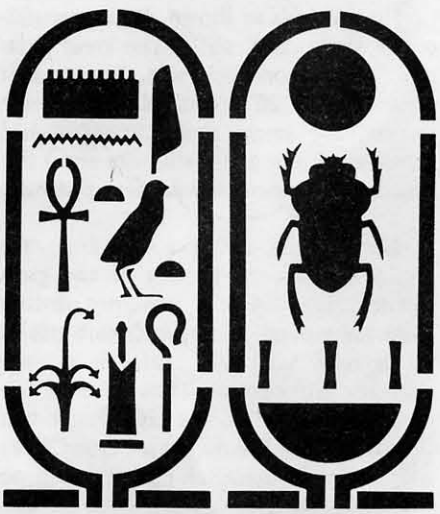
Cabinet. Finely crafted cedar, 2' x 3'. It is stuffed with a rainbow of variously colored, silky gowns. Also: 1 pair solid gold sandals, 1 pair silver trimmed sandals, 1 pair fine leather sandals, 2 black, longhaired wigs (one beaded with gold), 1 gold cobra crown with ruby eyes, 1 plain gold headband, 2 gold arm bracelets (cast in the form of coiled cobras), and several chains of gold and silver (money).

Chest. Gold plated, 2' x 3' x 2' high. The chest is trapped with pyrotechnics, which will blind everyone momentarily, if not detrapped. Inside is a 6" shallow drawer, which can be lifted out. Also, a profusion of magic items (the queen was

Queen's Chamber



1. Alabaster sarcophagus, 3½' high, 8' long, sealed at either end.
2. Iron keg, 5' high.
3. Cedar cabinet, 2' x 3'.
4. Gold plated chest, 2' x 3' x 2' high.
5. Ivory couch, with curved headrest, wind chimes hanging over it.
6. Cedar table with gold stool and large silver mirror. Various bottles, jars, cups, and other small objects visible on top.



a collector):

1. A small, gold bottle. (Philter of love.)
2. A small, silver bottle. (Potion of delusion. The character will think he's poisoned and dying. He will fall to the floor, breathing normally, but thinking he's dead until someone tells him different.)
3. A small, onyx bottle. (Potion of dimunition.)
4. A small, crystal bottle. (Oil of slipperiness.)
5. A 1' gold tube, sealed on both ends. (Inside: A wand of wonder: 1-30 mouse, 31-60 butterflies, 61-80 grass, 81-100 leaves. 5 charges.)
6. A reed box with the word "driftwood" on the lid. (The box is empty; it's a folding boat.)
7. A broad, leather belt. (Girdle of femininity/masculinity.)
8. A small, lapis lazuli jar. (Keoghtom's Ointment, 5 doses.)
9. A 6-faceted ruby. (Jewel of flawlessness.)
10. A small, ostrich-skin box, with the inscription "Sail Away!" (Inside: Quaal's Feather Token Fan.)
11. A small, velvet bag. (Inside is a roughly-polished agate, a stone of good luck.)
12. Scroll – Speak With Plants.
13. Scroll – Remove Curse.
14. Scroll – Remove Skunk Stink. (MU spell; works on one person only.)
15. Small, 3-string lute. (Fochlucan Bandore.)
16. 1' tall brass bottle inscribed with the word "now." (Eversmoking bottle.)
17. 4 small clay pots, full of earth.
18. Large sack. (Bag of beans. First bean brings tiny, 4" hippopotamus that tips over pot, lumbers around, then tags after the party. Second brings a corn stalk; the kernels are gold nuggets. The sixth creates a wall of thorns, as per the 6th level druid spell. This does no immediate damage, but makes the whole area very prickly. After the last bean is planted, a skunk appears, AC9, 2 HTK. It sprays everyone who hacks at it.)
19. A bronze horn. (Horn of bubbles.)
20. A ruby-colored box, with 4 ivory jars and a 1' brush. (Nolzur's Marvelous Pigments.)
21. A silk bag, with something spherical inside. (A crystal ball, but the party won't learn much using it in this dungeon.)
22. A short, gold-plated trident. (Trident of warning.)
23. A heavy granite box. (A dusty rose prism will spring out and hang in the air when the box is opened. It is an ioun stone of +1 protection.)

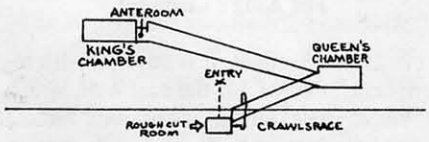
(Basically, this chest was designed as a time trap, delaying the tournament players with a series of little puzzles.)

Couch. Ivory, with a curved head rest and wind chimes hanging over it. The chimes are gold, in the shape of cats.

Table. Cedar table, with a stool before it. The stool is gold, with black leopard fur on the seat. There is a large, silver mirror on the table. Also:

1. Three squat, round ebony jars (kohl).
2. A transparent crystal jar (cold cream).
3. Two small cups, one jade, one chalcedony (green eye shadow, blue eye shadow).
4. Three two-inch tall cones of wax, impregnated with perfume.
5. A serpentine bottle, 6" tall (gardenia water).
6. A marble bottle, 6" tall (lily water).
7. A long, flat ivory box (henna).
8. An amethyst jar. (It contains lots of small gems and beads. Two are diamonds).
9. A 1' x 8" x 8" gold-inlaid ebony box, with two drawers. The top contains 2 finely polished copper wristlets, a ruby necklace with platinum stringing, a sapphire necklace and matching earrings, and lots of gold rings. The bottom contains a pectoral with overlapping gold platelets, each inscribed with a different flower.
10. A gold-trimmed hand mirror, silver face, with Kimberani's picture on the back.
11. A gold tray, gold wine jug, 2 gold cups.

(If the players want to waste their time playing with the makeup, that's OK, too.)



View From North

The Mummies

The passage leading out of the queen's chamber is made of red granite, and slopes up 30 degrees. After 20' it widens to 20'. After 130', it ends with a 3' x 3' portal. On the other side is a 10' x 12' room, with a second portal, 5' wide and 10' high. On either side of the second portal stands a silver coffin.

The coffins will not open until at least half of the party enters the antechamber. At that time, two mummies (AC3, 24 and 30 HTK) will spring out, yell "Trespassers in the king's tomb!" and attack.

Inside one coffin is a small bag which appears to contain nothing but dust (dust of appearance) and a marble bottle (which contains a +7 giant strength potion). In the other coffin is a crossbow, very finely crafted, as befits a royal guard. (Light crossbow, +3 for accuracy, and 12 bolts.)

Pictograph Parchments

In the tournament, these parchments started the five players on their quest. They may be adapted as necessary for campaign play.

Cleric. The king has said, "Oh Monster, lie down; you are the mysterious one of whom the gods speak; because you are one who has no legs, because you are one who has no arms, with which you could walk after your brethren the gods. You shall not avail, I shall live again. With this my ward, I command you, lie down!" The king and his power lie in his chamber.

Fighter. The king has said, "Get thee back, return, get thee back, thou fiend of Sebek! Thou shalt not advance to me, for I bear the protection of my arms. I have the dominion!" The king and his power lie in his chamber.

Magic User. The king has said, "Horus has taken possession of his Eye, and has given it to me. I have taken the Eye of Horus with me, it is mine now, it protects me on the Path." The king and his power lie in his chamber.

Paladin. The king has said, "All you deceitful and evil creatures – you hide in the darkness. With my shining pectoral, I shall walk the true Path. You shall not effect your errand against me; be off! Out of it!" The king and his power lie in his chamber.

Thief. The king has said, "Strength is given me by Set, and I cannot be weakened, because I fight and grow strong again. The power of Set is ringed about me as I go forth on the Path. Be gone!" The king and his power lie in his chamber.

The King's Chamber

A 25' x 25' room, it is covered with inscriptions, except for the east wall, which is blank. The entire room will radiate magic, if such is detected.

There are about 100 inscriptions in the room. On either side of the portal appears the inscription, "Great strength and destroyer, exalted in dignity." (This is Kimberani's royal name.)

One inscription bears the Eye of Horus pictograph. It says, "Oh King, stand up, take your bright tunic, take your cloak upon you, don the Eye of Horus, that it may be joined to you and joined to your flesh. Then you may go forth in it, that the gods may see you clad in it, this garment of which the gods are afraid."

Other translations should be determined randomly:

1. Get back, O Longhorn, doomed to slaughter, on whose vertex are the fingers of the Earth god. Fall down! Crawl away!

2. Oh my father the king, be a spirit in the horizon, be enduring in the firmament; may you give orders at the head of the living forever.

3. I have come to you, you Old One; may you turn back to me as the east wind is turned back behind the west wind; may you come to me as the north wind comes after the south wind.

4. You are the daughter, mighty in her mother, who appeared as a bee; make the King a spirit within yourself, for he has not died.

5. O my father the King, the doors of the sky are opened for you, the doors of the celestial expanses are thrown open for you. The gods are full of sorrow, they come at the sound of the outcry of Isis.

6. Hail to you Food! Hail to you Abundance! Hail to you Grain! Hail to you Flour! Hail to you, you gods! I shall eat of that which the gods eat, seated on the throne of sunlight.

7. The great centipede goes down, having cursed Him of the Mansion, and He of the Mansion is cursed by the centipede.

8. This ascent of yours from your house, O King, is the ascent of Horus seeking you, O King. Your porters hasten, your heralds hurry, they tell Ra that you have come, O King.

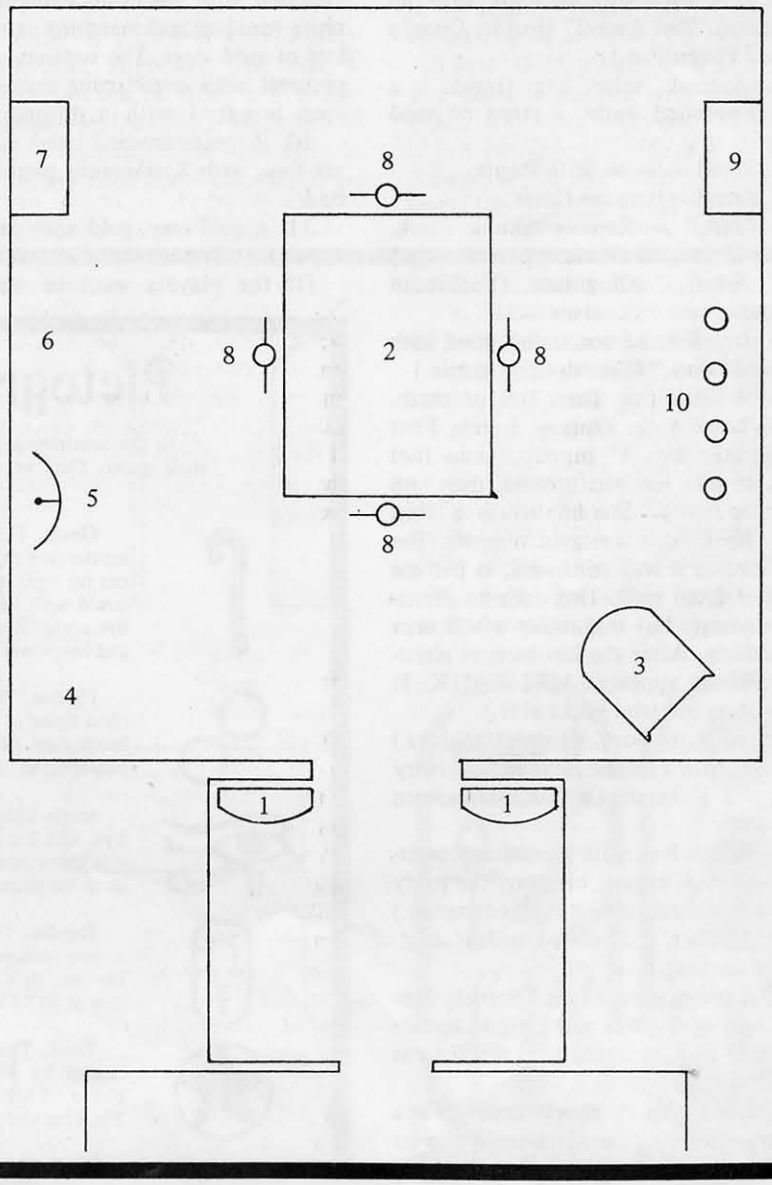
9. O Tremble, Ferryman of the Field. I am your ox-herd who is in charge of your birthplace. I am your potter who broke the egg when you were born.

10. O King, free course is given to you by Horus; you flash as the Lone Star in the midst of the sky; you have grown wings as a great breasted falcon, as a hawk in the evening traversing the sky.

(These inscriptions were significant to their makers, but have nothing to do with the adventure!)

Also in the chamber:

King's Chamber



1. Silver coffin.
2. Sarcophagus of gilded alabaster, seals broken.
3. Chariot, covered with gold leaf and plate, hammered into fine detail, with many inlays and semi-precious stones.
4. Scattered weapons.
5. Gold shield on stand.
6. Scattered armor.
7. Cedar cabinet.
8. Gilded female statues, 4' high, arms outstretched.
9. Ebony table, 2' x 4', holding jewelry, scarabs, cups, and other small objects.
10. Four pedestals with animal-headed human statues: ox, lion, jackal and crane.

Sarcophagus. Gilded alabaster. The seals are broken. It is barely possible to lift the lid; it takes every member of the party. Inside is a heavy, gold coffin with the figure of Kimberani. It is covered with a linen shroud and dried flowers. It is impossible to lift the lid of the coffin; it radiates magic if detected.

Chariot. It is totally covered with gold leaf and plate, hammered into very fine detail, with many inlays and semi-precious stones (no diamonds).

Weapons. Ivory weapons stand, with two uprights and a 3' crossbar. (The crossbar is a rod of resurrection, with the cleric's emblem carved on one end.) Still on the rack: a battle ax with a silver hand grip, a silver shortsword with lapis lazulis, and a plain gold shortsword. Scattered on the floor:

1. A 2-handed sword with a gold hilt, Kimberani's royal name inscribed on the blade.
2. A longsword with a gold hilt, set with opal and peridot.
3. A 6' staff, 1½" in diameter, with smooth, gold bands.
4. Two cedar, gold-trimmed boomerangs.
5. A morningstar, obviously ornamental. Solid gold, with a different jewel on the tip of each spike (one diamond).
6. Two daggers carved of marble, one with black streaks, one with red.

Shield. A gold shield still rests on its stand. It is obviously ornamental, studded with many gems (no diamonds).

Armor. Two armor stands have been knocked over, and their components mixed on the floor. There is a steel helm, engraved gold breastplate, regular plate armor, a set of wrist guards, and a golden helm. It is all too small for anyone in the party, except for the bracers, which will fit anybody. Closer examination reveals a crocodile – emblem of Sebek, and hence of the fighter – engraved on each. (These are bracers of defense, AC2.)

Cabinet. A variety of colorful, gold-trimmed clothing: gowns, tunics, cloaks, skirts, two pair of gold sandals (one obviously worn), one pair of silver sandals, one pair of silver sandals with ivory chasing. (One of the cloaks bears the Eye of Horus on the back. This is the MU's emblem. It will not be obvious unless someone is looking for it specifically. The cloak is a +2 cloak of protection.)

Also in the cabinet: heavy silver and gold chains (money), 3 black wigs (one plain, one gold beaded, one with beads of beryl, amber, and carnelian), a gold cobra crown with ruby eyes and a silver cat-head crown.

Golden Girls. Surrounding the sarcophagus are four gilded statues, female in form, with arms outstretched. Each is about 4' high, and can be moved with little difficulty.

Table. Ebony, 2' x 4'. Golden lion heads stick out from each corner. On the table:

1. Five scarabs, one with the head of Thoth, two with beetles, one with the head of Isis, and one with the head of Bast.
2. A large seal ring with Kimberani's royal name.
3. A pair of highly polished copper wristlets.
4. A gold hippopotamus, 1½" long, back hollowed out. Looks like a hand bowl.
5. Four matching gold goblets, rimmed with jade and ruby.
6. A larger matching pitcher, with an additional row of black polished agate.
7. A 1' square ebony box with a gold ring in the center of the lid and four gold scorpions, one in each corner, facing outwards. (The box can be safely opened by lifting the ring. Touching any upper edge results in 3 points damage, no poison. Inside is a golden pectoral, resting on loose velvet. A scarab in the center of the pectoral has the paladin's emblem on it. (This is a necklace of adaptation with a scarab of protection.)
8. An ornate alabaster cup, with stylized lions on either side of the handles.

Pedestals. There are four pedestals, each with a man bearing a stylized animal head – an ox, a lion, a jackal, and a crane. The lion is posed as though roaring, and the jackal is snarling. (The jackal-headed figure is a statue of Set, a clue to the thief's emblem. There is a ring – of vampiric regeneration – through the creature's nose. If the ring is removed without detrapping, the jackal head will bite for 3 points damage.)

The Path

When any emblem is picked up by the proper person – rod to cleric, bracers to fighter, cloak to MU, pectoral to paladin, ring to thief – the pictograph identifying it begins to glow. Once all five characters have their emblems (or all of the survivors have the proper emblem, and all the emblems are found), a golden portal 10' wide will appear on the east wall. On either side there is an inscription which translates "Doorway of the Perfect Path." Above the door is the legend, "The power and dominion are yours, Oh King, if you will use them. Prepare yourself for fearful encounters."

Going further, the glow fades. In fact, all torches and other sources of light fade. The emblems still glow, but the characters cannot see each other. If they call, no one answers. At this point, the DM should hand a separate encounter sheet to each player with an emblem. Each deals with his problem separately. The solution is always the same – use the emblem to get rid of the guardian. The characters can display the emblem, order the creature to depart by the power of the emblem, or recite the lines from their parchment.

No magic works on the path. Spells cast are not forgotten. Time does not elapse for spells which have already been cast. Thrown objects are not lost either; they simply hang in the air in front of the character.

If a character successfully wards, well and good. If not, he takes damage equal to 25% of his maximum HTK, and gets to try again. If he fails again, he takes a similar amount of damage, and in any case, returns to the path. (If a corpse reappears on the path, the emblem it carried is missing.)

As the party continues, they hear a receding cacophany of several beasts. Normal sight returns. The emblems still glow, but the characters can see each other. (They may now regroup.)

Mushiy'a

In front of you is another glowing portal. This looks out on a magnificent audience chamber. A plush purple carpet leads from the Portal to a large marble throne, although it divides half-way along to run around either side of a 30' diameter clear pool. The chamber is 100' wide and 90' long, with a single double door visible in the middle of the right wall. (The portal extends 10' into the room – the party can't see the wall right behind them.) The front of the throne is 30' from the back wall, so the front edge of the pool is 10' away. You notice some turbulence in the pool. Seated on the throne is your old sage, Darris, but appearing in a most unsage-like role. He is dressed in a richly brocaded robe of black silk, bound with a red waistband. At his feet lie two rusty-red hound dogs with black teeth and glowing red eyes. As you watch, one of the double doors opens slightly, as though something had flickered through. Darris looks in that direction, then slowly back until he is focusing on a spot just before the throne. More flickering appears where he is looking. One hound raises his head and growls slightly. Darris listens to something for a moment, then speaks: "So someone walks the Path this hour! This will be the culmination of 100 years of painstaking effort. The hardest part, of course, was tying Kimberani's heavenly Path to my earthly palace. With the emblems of state that these bright fools deliver to me, I, Mushiy'a, will soon

wreak havoc among the gods in heaven! I tried to fetch the emblems myself, but Kimberani knew all too well of me, and warded his tomb against me specifically. I succeeded only in breaking the seals on his sarcophagus before being permanently expelled from his chamber. But this time I will triumph! With your help, of course. Stand by, my shady friend, and we will soon make an end of this matter."

Mushiy'a's party includes Kurna, two hell hounds (20 HTK each), a shadow (20 HTK), a water weird in the pool (also 20 HTK), and himself.

Remember that neither magic nor missile weapons will work while the party is on the Path. Mushiy'a will have to entice the characters off the path.

As soon as the evil wizard finishes his speech, Kurna will leap into the room snarling. He will make two bounds around the pool toward Mushiy'a. Mushiy'a will appear to fry him with a wand of lightning. (Actually, it is a wand of illusion, and has but one charge.)

The hell hounds and shadow will go around the edges of the pool toward the characters. The water weird will wait until a character approaches the pool, then try to pull him into the water. (This does 1 point of damage the first round of immersion, and 3 points every subsequent round.) There is no damage to the wearer of the pectoral. At the bottom of the pool is a 3" iron ring. Pulling the ring drains the pool in two melee rounds.

Mushiy'a fights as an 8th level MU, AC7, 40 HTK. He has a staff of striking, bracers of defense, AC8, and a +1 ring of protection. His spells are:

1. Dimension Door
2. Sleep
3. Shield
4. Stinking Cloud
5. Shield
6. Sleep
7. Mirror Image
8. Lightning Bolt
9. Sleep
10. Lightning Bolt
11. Sleep
12. Magic Missile
13. Magic Missile
14. Scare

Mushiy'a has initiative. He will use it to Dimension Door to a corner of the room behind the portal, effectively disappearing. If the party hesitates, he will use the additional time to cast a Shield spell. He will cast his next spell on the first person to emerge. He will not use his staff of striking unless he can't throw a spell.

Kurna will "stay dead" until someone attacks Mushiy'a. He will then "come alive," and attack the person threatening his master from behind, at +4. Kurna is aware that he can't hurt the wereleopard, and will never attack him. The wereleopard is not immune to any of the other monsters in the room.

The shadow will flee if struck by the rod of resurrection. However, this may have a detrimental effect on the rod. There is a 40% chance it will cease to function for the remainder of the adventure.

Finale

It is not possible to escape the room until Mushiy'a and his party are defeated. At that time, the path will spring free of its unnatural mooring on this world. In doing so, it tears away the face of the palace, revealing an army of beseiging soldiers. They knew of Mushiy'a's plan and had been vainly trying to stop him.

The characters are greeted as heroes. They are profusely thanked for recovering the royal treasures of Kimberani, which are politely confiscated. Specifically exempt: anything taken from the slavers, Scheherezade, the hobgoblins or Mushiy'a. (The DM might also allow a thief to pocket a choice item.) The superstitious soldiers refuse even to touch the items with the holy emblems. These belong to the gods. But as the gods are unlikely to claim them, the characters can keep them. They also keep a cash reward and an award of experience points to be determined by the DM.

(In the tournament, the players had two hours and forty minutes, real time, to complete their mission, and were awarded points for each task achieved.)

In the tournament, these messages were passed to the players as their characters met individual challenges on the Perfect Path. Three messages are given for each emblem bearer – one for when he meets his challenge, one if he succeeds, and one if he fails.

Bracers Wearer. You feel a wave, and then a second wave. Kurna floats by, paddling (and thrashing about) furiously. You find it much easier to swim along, rather than trying to walk. You feel a great turbulence, and hear a muted bass roar. You see a giant crocodile rushing toward you, mouth gaping wide. It has *lots* of teeth. What do you do (in ten words or less, on this sheet)?

Bracers Wearer. The croc gives a roar and disappears. You have time to try out your backstroke.

Bracers Wearer. The crocodile strikes for ____ points of damage. You have not affected it at all. It swings about and comes roaring back. What do you do (in ten words or less, on this sheet)?

Cloak Wearer. You feel a draft. Kurna gives a delighted cry, and glides by on wing, looping you. You feel very light. (You might try flying a bit.) You hear a shriek from above. A *very* large falcon is diving at you. What do you do (in ten words or less, on this sheet)?

Cloak Wearer. The falcon screams and disappears. You have time for a few loop-de-loops.

Cloak Wearer. The falcon slashes with its claws for ____ points of damage. You have not affected it at all. It swings about and dives again. What do you do (in ten words or less, on this sheet)?

Pectoral Wearer. You are walking down an ever-narrowing canyon. It is getting darker, but you can tell that the trees and brush around you are dwindling into stunted and twisted mockeries of themselves. It might be that a pale green haze hangs in the air – it's too dark to tell. Suddenly, a Green Dragon surges up, seemingly from out of the ground itself. (It's not huge, but large enough.) It immediately dives at you. What do you do (in ten words or less, on this sheet)?

Pectoral Wearer. The dragon screams and disappears. You have time to polish the chlorine corrosion off your pectoral and make it all shiny again.

Pectoral Wearer. The dragon rakes at you for ____ points of damage. You have not affected it at all. It turns to strike again. What do you do (in ten words or less, on this sheet)?

Rod Bearer. You are walking down a dusty forest path, heading toward the sound of running water. The air is dry and still. Suddenly, you realize that the fallen tree you are about to step over is the body of a giant snake. You know this, because the snake is staring you evilly in the eye, from about a yard away. What do you do (in ten words or less, on this sheet)?

Rod Bearer. The snake hisses and slides away. You have time for a refreshing drink from that cool spring you see just ahead.

Rod Bearer. The snake strikes for ____ points of damage. You have not affected it at all. It rears back and prepares to strike again. What do you do (in ten words or less, on this sheet)?

Ring Bearer. You couldn't see much before, but it seems even darker, now. Maybe a few stars twinkle overhead – certainly no recognizable constellations. You hear the click of trotting toenails. The stride lengthens, and then you realize that a *large* jackal is leaping at you. What do you do (in ten words or less, on this sheet)?

Ring Bearer. The jackal howls and disappears. You have time to wish upon a star. (No, the wish won't work. Sorry.)

Ring Bearer. The jackal bites for ____ points of damage. You have not affected it all. It recovers from its rush, and crouches to leap again. What do you do (in ten words or less, on this sheet)?

Persons With No Emblems. Those of your friends with emblems are being challenged by the beasties set to guard the Path against intruders. (Nobody notices you.) Just keep walking. (No, you can't help anybody – this is magic, remember?)

Persons With No Emblems. Second round of combat resolution. Keep on keeping on. Y'all are about to regroup, up where that slight glow is beginning to appear.

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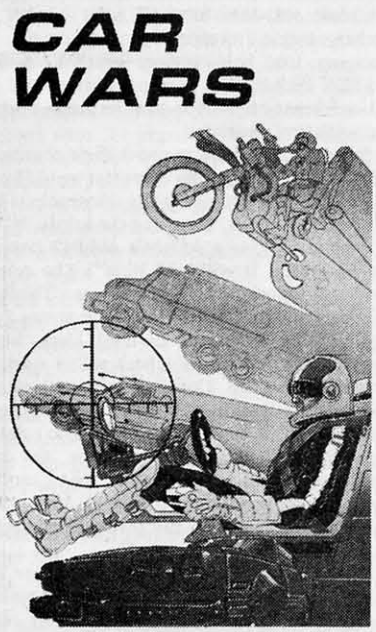

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Games for which reviews have been assigned or received include: *The Burgundy Pit, Catacombs of the Bear Cult, Dragon's Eye, Hazard, Interstellar Skirmishes, Invasion Earth, Journey to the Center of the Circle, Lomodo IVa, Marooned on Ghostring, Masters of Mind, Portals of Irontooth, Rogue Moon of Spinstorm, Salvage Mission, Sapies, Sea of Mystery, Seldon's Compendium of Starcraft, Sewers of Oblivion, The Shattered Alliance, Simba Safari, Sourcebook 2, Star Cluster One, The Sultan's Pearl, Tarkin's Landing, Theta Borealis Sector,* and *Uragyad'n of the Seven Pillars.*

Games for which we are currently seeking reviewers include: *Adventure in Time, Empire of the Overmind, Grand Master, Griffin Mountain, Imperial Data Recovery System,* and *Space Ace 21.*

THE CASTLE PERILOUS (Westwind Simulations, POB 128, Verona, MO 65769); $5.95. Designed by James Sheldon. 72-page rules, 4-page 8¼" x 10½" combat sheet, two 8¼" x 10½" drawings, 8½" x 14" random number sheet, bagged. Two or more players; playing time indefinite. Published 1981.

THE CASTLE PERILOUS is one of a new breed of fantasy role-playing games – basic, low-priced rules, with scenarios and complexities to be offered in low-priced supplements. The basic set does have all rules needed for combat, magic, monsters, and treasures. Encouraging true role-playing, over ¼ of THE CASTLE PERILOUS is maps, fiction, and factual information – for the express purpose of stimulating creativity.

Players must strive to enact their characters, and try to learn what the character would know. ("You say you're tying up the unconscious bandit? Here's a string, show me the knots." "You say you're making a knight's saddle? Describe how and what it will look like.") The combat rules are unique and easy to use: There's a "bracket number" for hitting each armor type, improved by increased fighting level, higher brackets allow more numbers rolled on three dice to score a hit. Contingencies such as missiles, weapon length differences and fatigue are swiftly resolved by die roll. The magic rules are fascinating: Players must describe six parameters of a spell (such as color, hand motion, physical manifestation). For each one missed there's that chance on the throw of a die that the spell doesn't work.

That most fascinating feature becomes THE CASTLE PERILOUS' downfall. Players want to play magicians, not *be* magicians. They resent memorizing trivial details to cast spells. Similarly, they expect quantitative measures of success, such as experience points, to depend on concrete criteria rather than abstractions such as what a character "should" know. Other problems in THE CASTLE PERILOUS come from its adherence to the use of fighting levels in which characters advance as they accumulate experience. Hit points, damage inflicted, spell potency are multiplied by level. Thus, low level characters are helpless, high level characters invincible.

THE CASTLE PERILOUS has much to recommend it. You get an interesting set of rules for a low price. But most people will not enjoy the vague descriptions meant to encourage imagination, or the requirements to memorize spell descriptions. There's potential here, FRPG referees can get valuable ideas, but the average gamer will probably be happier with other products.

– Ronald Pehr

OREGON TRAIL (Fantasy Games Unlimited); $13.98. Designed by Leonard Kanterman and Steven Ulberg. Boxed game, with 28" x 22" map, 12 page rulebook, pad of record sheets, 1d20, 2d6, 8 playing pieces. One or more players; playing time 1-2 hours. Published 1981.

"OREGON TRAIL is a game that attempts to recreate, in stylized fashion, the epic journeys of our fore-fathers, the pioneers who traveled across a continent in covered wagons and in doing so tamed the American West." Each player assumes the role of a wagon master, leading a small, medium, or large party along any of seven trails. A wagon master is characterized by five attributes: nature lore, hunting, Indian lore, military, and popularity. Each time a party enters a new hex, an encounter is rolled. This may be with a rockslide, drought, or disease, which must be survived; streams, which must be forded; animals, which may be hunted (deer or bi-

WRITING REVIEWS FOR THE SPACE GAMER

Capsule Reviews

Most of the reviews we print will be "capsule" reviews – 400 words or less. We pay $5 for each capsule review accepted. We want to run a review for *every* new SF or fantasy game or supplement.

Each capsule review should be five paragraphs long and contain:

(1) Basic information. Present these facts, in this order: NAME OF GAME (Publisher); price. Designer. (If applicable: "Supplement to ---," "Companion to ---," or similar note.) Format: list of components, with sizes of maps and rulebooks, number of counters, etc. Number of players; playing time. Publication date.

(2) General description of the game: background, the sides, course of play, special features, etc.

(3) Strong points. Discuss what is good about the game; in every game, there IS something worthwhile. "Fun" is a useless adjective. Be specific.

(4) Weak points. Every game has its problems, too. If the only faults you can find are minor ones, say so. If the game is fatally flawed, come right out and SAY SO. If you can phrase your criticisms as suggestions for improvement, do so.

(5) Summation. Your overall opinion of the game. Who should and should not buy it and why. Is the game worth its price?

All reviews must be signed; the reviewer's name will be printed. No game may be reviewed by its designer, by a playtester, or by an employee of the publisher. (Designer's articles are welcome, but must be billed as such!) Final note: If you can write a complete review in less than the full 400 words, by all means do so.

This review format is designed to encourage fairness and to give the reader enough information to let him decide whether he wants to buy that game. Keep that in mind when you write. This is a short review, *not* a complete analysis. For those who want to write longer reviews, each issue will have one or two –

Featured Reviews

These will be game reviews 1,000 to 2,000 words long. They should contain *all the above information,* plus whatever else the reviewer wants to say. They may be written in any format. A featured review may cover either a new game or one that has been on the market for some time. If TSG has not already printed a capsule review, write one and submit it at the same time. We may even use both.

son) or chased off (coyote, bear, snake, etc.); or Indians. A roll against one or more of the wagon master's attributes determines how well each of these challenges is met: a roll against hunting determines if the party is successful in hunting the deer they've spotted, for example, and a roll against Indian lore determines if an attempted parley succeeds.

The encounter tables indicate that a lot of thought and research have gone into the development of OREGON TRAIL. For example, the western U. S. has been divided into ten zones, each of which has up to six different tribes of Indians which might be encountered. There are different odds for encountering each tribe, and different odds for which of five ways that tribe will react to you. The graphics are nice and the rules are well organized (although there are a few glitches in each).

Unfortunately, the actual game is boring. In a recent game, I made 52 decisions and 89 dice rolls. 26 of those decisions were whether to advance to the next hex. Many of the others were just as automatic. The game requires little mental effort – there is plenty of action, but it mainly depends on uncontrollable dice rolls. In addition, there is no player interaction, direct or indirect. You can travel side by side with another train for 2000 miles, and never exchange a word with it, much less supplies. Wagon masters do not increase in ability as they successfully overcome difficulties – you roll up a new master for each game. OREGON TRAIL can't really be cited for historical accuracy because you don't know what parts are accurate and what have been dramatized. In sum, a nice try, but I can't think of a good reason to buy the game.

– David Ladyman

SPACE EMPIRES (Mayfair); $5.00. Designed by Neil Zimmerer. One 5½" x 8½" 8-page rulebook, 17" x 22" map, 108 die-cut counters, bagged. 2-6 players; playing time about one hour. Published 1981.

SPACE EMPIRES is another in Mayfair Games' line of easy-to-play simulations, perhaps the most interesting of the group. It is a game of space combat between 12 different races for control of a star sector, with rules for combat, movement, production of ships, and, in the advanced version, special abilities. The rules, as with other Mayfair products, are simply put and quite clear overall, even to a novice. The graphics are quite pleasing, especially the rules cover; those on the map are simple, yet functional – no blazing starfields to dull the vision during play. The game can be played in under an hour in most cases, yet it offers the possibilities for longer play between balanced players. While not a great departure in concept from games such as *Stellar Conquest,* or other empire-building space combat games, it has the distinct advantage of being playable in a fraction of the time such bigger games take.

What really sets SPACE EMPIRES apart from the run-of-the-mill space combat game is the inclusion of special powers for the different races in the advanced game, *a la Cosmic Encounter.* These can run from the ability to capture and use opponents' ships or duplicate your own to reversing the combat odds if against you, replaying any combat once or even owning a disintegrator ray which insures an automatic win on every attack (but not defense). The powers are balanced by the different combat factors of each races' ships and by the number available in the counter mix (no more than that can be built). Thus the race with the disintegrator has only four ships maximum available to it and has to worry about how to defend its home and captured systems to offset its offensive capabilities.

The only real problems I see in SPACE EMPIRES is that the differing number of ships in the counter mix makes the game quite unbalanced, since the powers are not used to offset this – especially where ships of one race with the same combat factor of another race's ships are more numerous. The designer does, however, recommend that the basic game be played only to familiarize yourself with the system and that the advanced game be used from then on. There are a couple of minor errors, too – a plural verb used where a singular should be, etc. – but nothing really serious.

Overall, SPACE EMPIRES is an interesting, enjoyable game if you like easy-to-play "quickies" with a twist. If you prefer a lot of complications, you might want to pass this one up – or perhaps wait for the expansion set mentioned at the end.

–William A. Barton

STAR PATROL, Second Edition (Gamescience); $15.00. Designed by Michael Scott Kurtick and Rockland Russo. One 67-page rule book with 12-page pull-out, 22" x 34" hex sheet, three 6-sided, five polyhedral dice, boxed. 2 or more players; playing time indefinite. Published 1981.

Gamescience's SPACE PATROL was one of the earliest SFRPGs, interesting for its time, but not in the same class as later games such as *Traveller* or its kin. Now, however, it has been revised and expanded into STAR PATROL and is, in effect, a whole new system. Whereas

The sun hangs low on the horizon illuminating the ruins of civilization with a bloody light. Is it the sunset of the earth or the sunrise of a brave new world? You can decide as you boldly stride the rubble strewn streets of the

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The Game is for 2 to 6 players and a referee in search of a different kind of adventure. It is a role-playing excursion into a post-holocaust world.

Aftermath! contains:

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- **Referee's Handbook detailing construction of the environment and running the game.**
- **Introductory Scenario to allow you to start play easily.**

***Aftermath!* provides a solid basic play mechanic that has been over 2 years in playtesting. Rules are provided for modern firearms, NBC weapons and protections, mutations, survival, high technology and more. The game is structured to allow the referee to decide the nature of the holocaust that destroyed the world in which play will occur. *Aftermath!* is a step forward in the art of role-playing games.**

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Space Patrol was little more than a set of rules for character generation and combat, with the added bonus of a scenario generator. STAR PATROL is a complete game system, incorporating, improving and expanding upon the old and adding a space travel and combat system, star system and planet generation tables and several sample scenarios. In addition, a set of plans for one of the more common STAR PATROL ships has been included, along with cut-out figures (*a la Cardboard Heroes*) and several dollars worth of dice.

STAR PATROL has many nice features: the weaponry section has been expanded to include many more weapons, primitive, modern and futuristic; exact parameters are provided to enable players to create characters of the most popular alien races in SF, from Green Martians to Gorn, from Kzinti to Wookies; and the scenario generators of the first edition have been reworked to provide a wider range of information than before. One interesting addition is the possibility for players to play Bolo characters–intelligent cybernetic tanks as created by Keith Laumer. Another admirable trait of STAR PATROL is its authors' openness in admitting the source of their ideas, reflected in an extensive SF bibliography at the end which even includes *Traveller* and *Ogre* as source materials. And, of course, the whole rule book is typeset, including the copious charts and tables, giving it a much neater appearance than the first edition.

There are some flaws. The rules are still just a bit vague in places, making it necessary for the "mission master" to establish his own guidelines here and there. A few of the charts and tables may take a bit of thought to figure out. How accurate some of the scientific assumptions are–especially in the star system generation tables–is open to question, too, but this is, after all, space opera, not hard SF. Several typos have wormed their way into the text and charts, but the errata printed on the inside back cover takes care of the worst of these. And I'm afraid the badly-printed cut-out characters here will never seriously threaten *Cardboard Heroes*.

Overall, STAR PATROL is a valid alternative to *Traveller*.

Relatively complete – and playable.

–William A. Barton

STARFIRE III: EMPIRES (Task Force Games); $3.95. Designed by David M. Weber. One 6" by 9" 28-page rules booklet and 13" by 11" campaign map. Two or more players; playing time several evenings and longer. Published 1981.

Task Force Games' *Starfire* was a fairly simple tactical game of starship battles between several races. *Starfire II* added fighters *a la Battlestar Galactica* and a bit more complexity to the system. Now STARFIRE III: EMPIRES takes the *Starfire* system even further, expanding and incorporating the tactical game into a grand strategic game of exploration and conquest, following in the footsteps of *Stellar Conquest, Starfall* and other games. The rules cover home worlds for several player races (including those ubiquitous Terrans of Sol), warp points and warp lines to other stars, star systems, colonization, alliances, genocide, rebellions, and more. Several new ship systems are introduced to help update and improve *Starfire* ships, too. The map shows the area of space surrounding the player race worlds and all unexplored systems–some 60–in the neighborhood. Ownership and knowledge of *Starfire* is absolutely necessary for playing EMPIRES; so is *Starfire II* for full enjoyment, though you can get by without it.

STARFIRE III: EMPIRES seems tailor-made for those players who enjoyed the ease and simplicity – and didn't mind the scientific inaccuracies – of *Starfire*, yet who also long for campaign-type games, where they can boldly go . . . etc. Using a referee and the random generation of nonplayer systems and races (which includes rolls against militancy to determine what, if any, hostile actions they will take against players), EMPIRES can provide a lot of surprises.

One obvious liability in EMPIRES is the length of play involved. A campaign will take a minimum of several nights of play and could conceivably stretch out for months. Those who wish for short games should stick to *Starfire* itself and forget about empire building. The rules are a bit unclear in spots, such as on the number of closed warp points, but shouldn't be too difficult to figure out or reach a compromise with a referee-governed game.

Overall, STARFIRE III: EMPIRES does a good job of what it sets out to do–complicating and extending the *Starfire* system into a campaign game. If such appeals to you, and you already own *Starfire* and perhaps *Starfire II*, you should find it worth the buy.

–William A. Barton

SUPPLEMENTS

ACTION ABOARD (FASA); $6.00. Designed by Bill Paley. Approved for *Traveller*. One 6" by 9" 44-page booklet, one 11" by 17" sheet of deck plans, backprinted. Two or more players; playing time indefinite. Published 1981.

ACTION ABOARD is not a scenario per se. It is a set of character descriptions and stats, along with some situational ideas and scenario outlines, which referees may use to create scenarios for player characters aboard the 5000-ton luxury liner, *King Richard*. Complete stats and descriptions are given of ten important crew members, from Captain Ilana Iiree to Security Rover Four Rachel Three-Two-Seven (a clone). Descriptions and stats for seven major and 12 minor passenger characters who may become involved in a murder scenario are also provided. Situations, characters and encounter tables for a boarding action and seven pages of outline adventures add to the possibilities. Deck plans and a description of the ship round out the book.

The best aspect of ACTION ABOARD has to be the characters. Each is complete with stats, skills and a full description of past history, occupation, likes, dislikes and quirks–plus an appropriate illustration by Kevin Siembieda. From ex-commando General Sir Arthur Flintlock to the mysterious pirate known as Nightshade, the characters are ready for the referee to utilize to the fullest. Just the right touch of humor is maintained, too, such as in the description of how one character set off an aborigine rebellion on one planet by mistaking a religious shrine for an outhouse! The addition of the insert deck plans and the ship descriptions are a handy plus for those who don't have and don't wish to buy the 15mm plans. There are a few problems in ACTION ABOARD–a couple of typos, some abrupt changes in type face–and these are mostly minor. A set of DMs to avoid setting off a booby-trapped ship's locker should be -DMs rather than the +DMs listed, and I'd have added Demolitions skill as a DM there, too. But this is nothing most refs won't catch.

Overall, ACTION ABOARD is quite well

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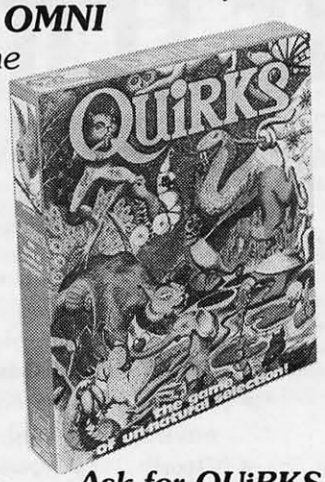

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done and should provide many hours of adventure for *Traveller* players who can appreciate several different types of scenarios.

–William A. Barton

AMYCUS PROBE (Judges Guild); $5.98. Designed by Dave Sering. Approved for *Traveller.* One 8½" x 11" 30-page book. 7 players; playing time indefinite. Published 1981.

AMYCUS PROBE concerns the investigation of an alien installation discovered on the undeveloped planet Amycus in the Osiris Deep subsector in JG's Gateway Quadrant. Players take the part of crew members, troops, and a scientific team from the 1000-ton provincial cruiser *Hrunta* as they probe the mysteries – and the defenses – of the installation. The booklet comes with fully equipped, pregenerated characters, deck plans for the *Hrunta* and its 40-ton assault boats, a planetary map, maps of the installation, and rules covering the special equipment used by the group. New items of equipment include guided recon drones, tac missiles and portable sensor/scanners similar to *Star Trek*'s tricorders. A point system is included for tournaments.

As the first in a series designed for players new to *Traveller,* AMYCUS PROBE should work well. The characters provided are complete with stats, skills and equipment, ready to be assigned by the referee. Most of what the ref will need to run the adventure is included; there are even descriptions of the workings of the standard items of equipment and weapons, so it won't be necessary to constantly refer to other *Traveller* works. The graphics, many of them in color, are more appropriate and satisfying than on other recent JG releases, though the cover is rather weak.

There are problems. Each player is expected to run four characters – a crewman, two marines, and an analyst – which can be difficult, especially for new players. Some of the key numbers and letters are missing from the maps, and the grid on the installation map is off-center. The various areas on the *Hrunta* deck plans are not adequately explained, and there seems to be some confusion concerning her weaponry, particularly the particle accelerators. Furthermore, the ship is placed in the book so you have to remove the center pages to see the plans all in one piece. Finally, the end result of the mission does not seem to really compensate for the efforts expended to reach it, especially as a one-shot scenario.

I recommend that if AMYCUS PROBE be used, it be used in the campaign version and not as a one-time scenario. Provided that the later adventures in the series carry through on the theme, it could form the basis of an interesting campaign situation.

–William A. Barton

THE DRAGON TREE SPELL BOOK (Dragon Tree); $7.50. Edited by Ben and Mary Ezell and Dana Schaefer. FRP supplement. One 8½" x 5½" booklet. Published 1981.

This booklet is a compendium of 225 spells divided into zero to tenth level, for use with FRP games, especially D&D. The format follows AD&D (but with shorter descriptions), and there are references to spells with AD&D names, unexplained in this book. Some of the spells would probably be useful in other games, but in a game with a radically different approach to magic (such as *RuneQuest*) almost all of these spells would be out of place.

There is a lengthy discussion of magic systems preceding the spells which might be useful to players who know only one system. Many variations of spell point and klutz systems are described, to enable a GM to decide for himself whether he wants to stick with the AD&D Vancian system or switch to some other. This is the most original and informative part of the book.

The spells are listed by level, with all classes of spellcasters intermixed. An index lists spells alphabetically. The text is photo-offset reduced from a carbon ribbon typewriter, right-justified the hard way. It is perfectly legible, though not as impressive as typeset. Unfortunately, the level of spelling and grammar is well below the standards of the major publishers. ("Absorbsion" for "absorption"?) Words are sometimes left out of sentences. There is no excuse for this in a professional publication, even if TSR did it in original D&D.

Although the spell descriptions are occasionally hard to read, they are tempered by amusing (and sometimes instructive) stories of how spells have been used in games, as well as "excerpts" from "Tavern Tales" and magical tomes.

Typically, spells researched in a D&D campaign are rated one or two levels lower than they ought to be for good game balance. Spells printed in apas such as *Alarums and Excursions* used to be notorious for this failing. In general, Dragon Tree has avoided this pitfall, though a few spells are certainly too low compared to AD&D spells. In any case, a GM will have to think about the consequences of a spell in his world before he chooses to use one. The "zero level" *Purify Oil* spell would wreak havoc in campaigns which don't presently allow firebombs, for example. Those GMs who don't allow spell research can nonetheless use these spells for non-standard classes and "wild magician" NPCs. Because the spells are supple-

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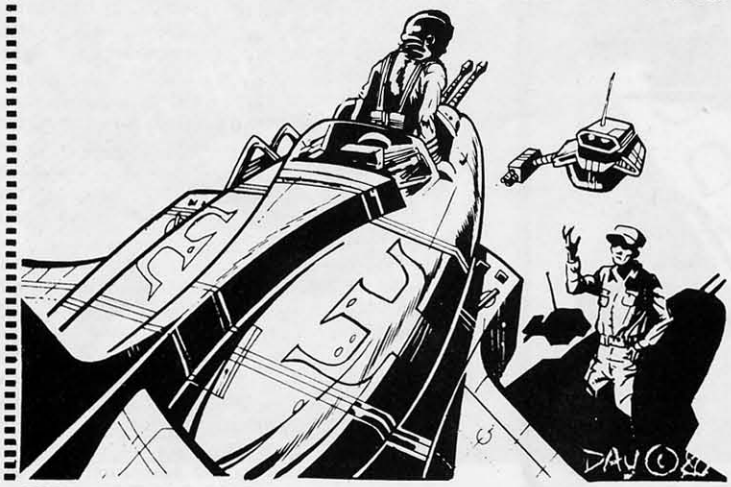

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ments to the AD&D list, there isn't a good mix around which to base an entirely new MU class.

The other spell compendium I've seen, *Spell Law* ($15), includes eight times as many spells as SPELL BOOK, but many of those are simple variations. SPELL BOOK may be more compatible with AD&D, but less with other FRPG, than *Spell Law*. In view of the competition, SPELL BOOK would be worth $5, but $7.50 is a little steep unless you're a spell collector or connoisseur.

– Lewis Pulsipher

THE DUNGEON TRAP HANDBOOK (Reilly Associates); $2.95. Designed by Gary E. Reilly. 16 8½" by 5½" offset-reduced pages plus covers, bagged. Published 1981.

Unlike *Grimtooth's Traps* and *Handbook of Traps and Tricks* (both reviewed in TSG number 43), this publication is not a description of particular traps. Instead it is 38 tables for randomly constructing traps. "One from column A, one from column B," etc. with percentage dice rolls. Tableitis is rampant in FRP-dom, but traps tables are an obvious idea and easy to make–you can do it in a hour or two–if you don't prefer to fit logical traps into your world. (The latter results in a better game than random construction, of course.) These tables are okay, showing commendable attention to detail, but they are in no way outstanding. They would have made a decent article in a magazine inclined to the nuts-and-bolts of role-playing games. But three dollars for less than 5,000 words is outrageous.

–Lewis Pulsipher

ENCHANTED TREASURES (Reilly Associates); $2.95. Designed by Dianne and Gary E. Reilly. 20 8½" by 5½" offset-reduced pages plus covers, bagged. Published 1981.

This is a description of 36 magic items usable in any FRP game. Leaving aside the frequent grammatical errors, the descriptions are clear enough and the items sound reasonable. They are not merely combinations of powers one can find in rulebook magic lists. One of my favorites is the Robe of the Dead, which enables the wearer to transform himself for a short while into an immobile replica of a deceased being in order to examine its memory, or use its speech or hearing. This is clever but not too powerful, if you add the proviso that the user must have known the deceased, or must hold some possession or body part of the deceased.

There are 36 items, seven of them harmful to the user, including two staves, two books, seven items of apparel, nine gems/jewels, seven weapons, and nine miscellaneous items.

Why must so many module publishers emulate TSR vintage-1974 with substandard grammar and spelling? Reilly Associates are no worse, perhaps better, than Wilmark or Dragon Tree, but that's not saying much. Take this sentence: "By touching the two outermost gems simultaneously, the mouth becomes animated." If you take the writer at his word, you must wonder how the presumably inanimate mouth could touch two gems in order to animate itself! The author meant, "When the two outermost gems are touched simultaneously, the mouth becomes animate," so why didn't he say so? Professional prices deserve professional work.

7,000 words for three dollars? No FRP supplemental material is *that* good. ENCHANTED TREASURES would have been an excellent 4-5 page magazine article (with proper editing), but 4-5 pages is a small fraction of a $2-3 magazine. It's terribly overpriced.

–Lewis Pulsipher

ENEMIES (Hero Games); $5.95. Edited by Steve Peterson and George MacDonald. One 24-page 8½" by 11" book. Supplement to *Champions*. Published 1981.

This is one of the first supplementary releases for the superhero RPG *Champions*. Presented are 36 villains of varying experience and intent, each with detailed statistics and illustrations.

I wouldn't buy this product if it were for an old, established RPG; six dollars for 36 NPCs is a little steep. However, it *is* worth it to pick up this booklet, simply because it contains so many complete characters. Character generation in *Champions* is by point-allocation, with some ambiguities in the rules. ENEMIES clears up some of the ambiguities, and corrects some problems that I didn't know existed. However, editing is sloppy. Several examples of identical disadvantages showed dissimilar point values. This may be because the values of disadvantages vary from campaign to campaign, and these characters were created for different campaigns, but this is not explained. There are a number of typos. The first villain in the book, evidently a genius at evasive maneuvering, has cleverly eluded the table of contents. The illustrations are fair to good, but layout of pages throughout the book is often amateurish and confusing.

Buyers wishing to see interesting and useful applications of *Champions* character-building would do well to pick this up.

–Aaron Allston

EXPEDITION TO ZHODANE (GDW); $4.98. Designed by Marc Miller. One 6" by 9" 48-page booklet. Two or more players; playing time indefinite. Published 1981.

Don't be deceived by the title of GDW's newest *Traveller* adventure, EXPEDITION TO ZHODANE; it doesn't take place on Zhodane, the Zhodani homeworld, as the title seems to imply. It concerns an expedition into Zhodani space in the Chronor subsector in the Spinward Marches. However, EXPEDITION TO ZHODANE is a solid *Traveller* adventure in the style of past GDW efforts. It begins with a job search by a group of characters on Utoland, an independent world in the Jewell subsector, and leads (as usual) to a dangerous mission, this time the rescue of a missing Imperial professor who . . . but to go further would spoil the plot. The adventure includes, along with player and referee information and pregenerated characters, a series of want ads from the *Utoland Gazette*, a rough map of the main city, a couple of new items of equipment, deck plans and stats for an asteroid ship, background info on the professor and his daughter (they *always* have daughters, don't they?), a list of *High Guard* stats for ship encounters, maps of the Jewell and Chronor subsectors, and a section on the Zhodani and their society, reprinted with minor changes from *Journal* 9.

The adventure has several high points–starship encounters with *Shivva* patrol frigates, local system defense boats and Imperial fighters, run-ins with the Zhodani thought-police, and interviews with possible patrons. The idea of the want ad page for locating the latter is a very nice touch and could easily be transferred to other adventures. Stats for a new ship type are always nice to have. And the "personality overlay" device of the professor has possibilities.

EXPEDITION TO ZHODANE may prove taxing on the referee to run properly. Quite a few items are left totally up to him–including the details of the professor's captivity, an important factor that should have received more attention. The pregenerated characters are really useless; they have neither the stats nor the skills to quality for most of the jobs listed in the want ads–including one or two listed as essential to the adventure! The ads present a bit too many possibilities for irrele-

vant side trips, too, which could bog things down unless the ref is sharp.

Still, while not as exciting a situation as, say, *Twilight's Peak* was, EXPEDITION TO ZHODANE should prove sufficient for several sessions of intriguing *Traveller* play.

–William A. Barton

FLEETWATCH (Marischal Adventures); $2.00. Designed by W.H. Keith. Approved for *Traveller*. One 8½" x 11" 4-page folio. 2 or more players; playing time indefinite. Published 1981.

FLEETWATCH is the second in Marischal's series on the close escort *Stag* during the Fifth Frontier War. In this one, the *Stag* is assigned to check on a scout fleetwatch station on Choleosti, the moon of a ringed gas giant in the Vilis subsector, after reports of Zhodani activity in the area. Arriving on Choleosti in the *Stag*'s gig, the adventurers find the fleetwatch station destroyed and themselves caught in a Zhodani trap. With only hours of air left in their suit tanks, they must make their way across the cratered terrain of Choleosti along with the survivors of the station to a hidden gig near the abandoned starport, dogged all the way by searching Zhodani troops and ships. The adventure includes, along with the basic situation and ref notes, a map of the moon from the station to the starport with a terrain key outlining travel times and effects and an encounter table.

Like *Flight of the Stag*, FLEETWATCH is brief, but complete. Everything the referee needs is included (except for a couple items referenced to *Traveller* Book 3), and room is left for improvising on the ref's part should he desire. The descriptions of the planet's terrain leave no questions as to how to administer the

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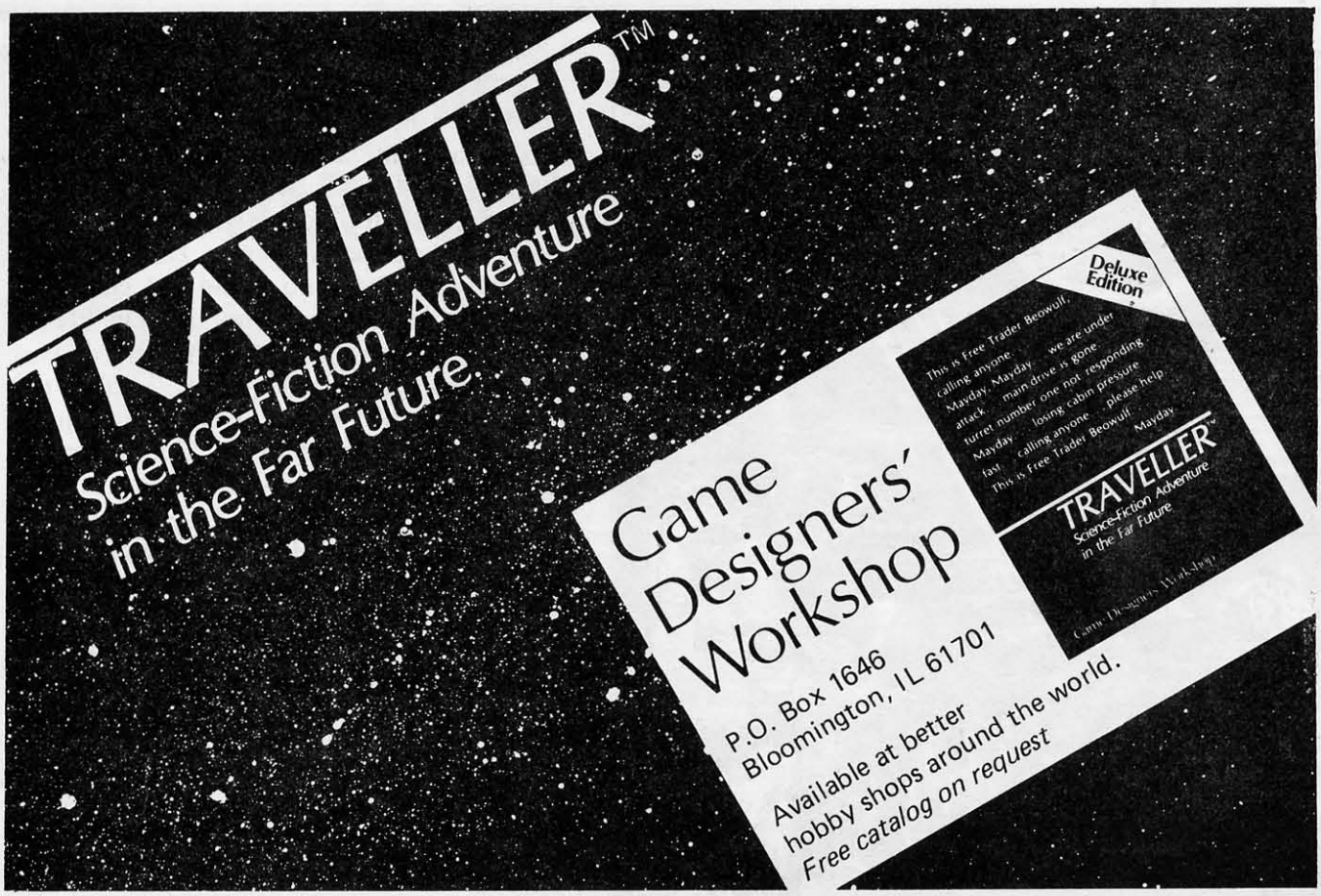
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various effects, and the illustrations by author Bill Keith are nicely executed.

The only fault I could locate in all FLEETWATCH was a slightly ambiguous statement concerning the "expenditure" of strength points in a rockslide encounter. I might have liked the star map as in *Flight,* but it isn't really necessary if the adventure is played as a one-shot scenario, and the ref will have the map from *Flight* if he plans a campaign with the *Stag.*

FLEETWATCH, like *Flight of the Stag,* is an excellent *Traveller* offering.

–William A. Barton

NITHUS (Group One); $6.95. *Traveller* supplement. One 8½" x 11" 18-page book, 17" x 22" full-color map, bagged. 2 or more players; playing time indefinite. Published 1981.

A high-tech planet of peace-loving bulldogs is the setting for NITHUS, one of the latest in Group One's series of planetary adventure locations for *Traveller.* Of course, the captutains, the intelligent inhabitants of Nithus, aren't *really* bulldogs . . . but if you can think of a better description after looking at their pictures, feel free to do so. According to the brief history given in the book, the captutains were once so warlike that they wiped out most of their population and then, realizing the horror of it all, turned to peace – yet retain a large "civilian" army, grouped into units called Brenalfors and armed with FGMP-15s and gunships mounting X-guns, and a 72-ship battle fleet in orbit around their system for defensive purposes. The space forces and military of this peace-loving race are fully described, as is their main city, the Star of Nepo, the ruins of an old capitol, Zanal (including an underground labyrinth), the geography and flora of the planet, and two of the main species of fauna. Encounter tables and the usual Group One colored planetary map – not as gaudy as some have been – complete the pack.

There are several points of attraction to draw players to adventure on Nithus – lots of opportunities for high-tech fire fights (if you can smuggle appropriate weapons in on the law-level 3 world) and the like. The armory of Nepo holds quite enough to attempt an assault; and the tunnels under Zanal hold some interesting, if somewhat improbable artifacts (plasma sceptres, force helmets, etc.). Of course, there's that peace-loving battle fleet to get past . . .

Aside from the usual G1 errors (see previous reviews), the problems here are a matter of taste. I find the animals of Nithus a bit more improbable than some in G1's stable – especially the strobe-eyed dorblas and the flying frisbee-like tweels.

Though not as useful an adventure setting as their earlier *Hydronauts,* NITHUS is at least more inspired than the recent *Lomodo IVa.* If you've liked other G1 products, you'll probably like this one – and if you didn't, you won't.

–William A. Barton

PRINCE OF THIEVES '81 (Gamelords, Ltd.); $4.95. By Kerry Lloyd and Larry Richardson. *Thieves' Guild* supplement. 32 8½" x 11" offset-reduced pages plus covers, unbound but punched with three holes, bagged. Published 1981.

PRINCE OF THIEVES is three scenarios used in Gamelords' competition at several summer game conventions. Aside from the set of characters used, however, and a brief description of which scenario was used in which round, the module includes virtually nothing that would help a GM run the tournament himself. There are a few suggestions about giving credit for particular actions, but nothing about the scoring system used. I suspect that the tournament GMs decided who advanced from one round to the next without benefit of any objective system.

This doesn't reduce the usefulness of the material for a campaign GM. Gamelords dominates, if not monopolizes, the market for sensible, imaginative scenarios for parties consisting entirely of thieves. This is the sixth in the series, after *Thieves' Guild I-IV* and *Free City of Haven.* But because it is part of a continuing series, it would be difficult to use unless you have *Thieves' Guild I,* which explains the Gamelords' rules, a variant of D&D. There are quite a few differences, so that many references in the scenarios would puzzle someone familiar only with D&D. Moreover, the authors themselves recommend that the GM be familiar with *Thieves' Guild II* before running the tomb scenario. This is a puzzle-type scenario, and quite clever, but I strongly second their recommendation.

The other two scenarios are, first, a series of potential encounters for highwaymen during the course of one day, and second, a description of the house of a prosperous bordello owner and eccentric collector (he particularly likes cats) from which the thieves desire to obtain a magic item. The first scenario includes rules for whips and lariats, which I have seen adequately defined nowhere else in adventure publications. As in other *Thieves' Guild* scenarios, the treasure values sound rather high, partly because thieves receive only one-fourth of the value of gold in experience (or thereabouts).

If you liked the earlier *Thieves' Guild* material, you'll like this, and at $5 it may be one of the better values of the series. But if you want to try this kind of thing for the first time, get *Thieves' Guild I* so that you'll understand the rules.

– Lewis Pulsipher

STAR CLUSTER OMEGA

STAR CLUSTER OMEGA is a correspondence game of military conquest, economic development, and political intrigue in a futuristic setting. *You* become the leader of a planet whose technology has led it to the door of interstellar travel. *You* lead the mighty war fleets into battle and command the brave troopers of your race in life or death struggles on the planet's surface. *You* direct your scientists' efforts, control the economy, and try to avoid the political pitfalls which may lead to bloody revolution.

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MINIATURES

BEAST OF BURDEN (Martian Metals); $2.95. 15mm *Traveller* figure. One beast and rider in bubble pack. Released 1981.

Among the latest releases in Martian Metals' line of 15mm *Traveller* figures is the BEAST OF BURDEN. This is a rather large (for 15mm scale) quadruped animal, looking a bit like a trunkless elephant or huge tapir, complete with a little 15mm rider. While not overtly derived from any of the named *Traveller* bestiaries, the BEAST could easily be used to portray any of the larger-sized grazers listed on the various encounter tables in *Animal Encounters* or in any of the *Traveller* adventures released thus far. It becomes especially appropriate for use with the new *Marooned/Marooned Alone* adventure, should a referee administering either scenario wish to employ miniature actions, as there is the possibility of adventurers encountering hunters or prospectors using similar beasts of burden.

BEAST OF BURDEN is sculpted with MM's usual skill; there are few significant flaws and little flash is evident on the examples I've seen.

Probably the least satisfying feature of BEAST OF BURDEN is its rider; I see little use for this figure in most situations, though it's possible it may come in handy for something in the wealth of possible *Traveller* scenarios that might come to mind.

Overall, BEAST OF BURDEN will probably prove of more use in your *Traveller* miniature animal encounters than those figures in the earlier *Aliens* pack. I'd recommend adding at least one or two to your collection.

—*William A. Barton*

COMPUTER GAMES

DEATHMAZE 5000 (Med Systems Software); cassette $12.95, disk $16.95. Program by Frank Corr for the 16K TRS-80 or 32K Apple. One player; playing time indefinite. Published 1981.

DEATHMAZE 5000 is another graphic adventure by the people who brought us *Labyrinth*. In this adventure, you are on the top floor of a 5 story building. Your goal is to es-

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THE WAR MACHINE

microcomputers in wargaming
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At last there's a magazine dedicated to computer gaming. Since July 1981, **The War Machine** has been covering the growing field of complex simulation games for all brands of microcomputer.

Our independent reviewers give detailed analyses of the latest computer wargames, SF and fantasy role-playing programs, sorting out the wheat from the chaff. We also feature articles by leading games software authors, who explain the techniques they use in developing their programs. Other articles cover methods of converting programs from one machine to another and offer general-purpose subroutines.

Most of the material in **TWM** is written by people who are themselves programmers and concentrates on what can be done with existing equipment, rather than making uninformed predictions about the future of computers.

The magazine acts as a forum for those active in computer gaming and publishes news of the work being done by its readership, spread over seven countries. If you are interested in writing your own games software and want to avoid re-inventing the wheel, **TWM** will tell you whether others are working along the same lines elsewhere, and how to get in touch with them.

Rapidly increasing in scope as well as size, the magazine is currently extending its coverage to include multi-player computer-moderated games and the application of A.I. techniques to create computerised game opponents. Now we're asking the readers if they want to see a computer wargame published in **TWM**.

U.S. subscriptions are currently handled by airmail. A six-issue annual subscription is £9.75, or a copy of the current issue can be obtained for £1.75. Please make payment in U.K. funds to:
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cape before you starve to death. The screen shows you what you see in 3-D graphics. Unlike *Labyrinth*, the hallways are not always featureless. There are elevators here and there, plus some things I shouldn't mention.

One advantage DEATHMAZE 5000 has over *Labyrinth* is that there are more objects to find. This gives a new player more of a feel of actually accomplishing something, and makes play more interesting. So if you are stumped as to what to do with the Crystal Ball, you can mess around with the Rotted Mutilated Sneaker. DEATHMAZE 5000 also has a huge, hidden maze which I suspect many players will never find; I only found it by luck. I have not finished mapping it; so far, it covers about 4 feet of graph paper! I might also add that the program loads on Model III or Model I, unlike a certain other company's adventures which claim Model III compatibility but do not load.

The only real disadvantage I see is that the graphics are not always correct technically. Sometimes a vertical line is left out or mistakenly inserted. *Labyrinth* does this also, but it hardly detracts from the fun or ability to understand what's happening. I only mention it because I can find no *real* fault with this game!

DEATHMAZE 5000 is an excellent game which will *not* be solved in a few weeks. If you like the prospect of a game that could last you for a *very* long time, get it. It's better than many $30.00 games I've seen, both in price and in gaming value.

– Russ Williams

THE HUMAN ADVENTURE (Med Systems Software); $9.95. Cassette by William F. Denman, Jr. for 16K TRS-80. One-player educational game. Published 1981.

This is an interesting game based on Isaac Asimov's story of miniaturized scientists injected into a man's bloodstream. You must travel with the flow of the blood and use a laser or interferon to combat antibodies, white blood cells, and cancer. Once the cancer is destroyed, you have completed your mission. The longer it takes you to navigate through the circulatory system, the greater the chance the cancer will spread, so time is a factor.

This is a truly interesting and fun educational game. At each location, text appears on the screen giving anatomical information about the organ or vessel. The game can be played in "exploration mode" in which there is no cancer, providing an opportunity to "sail around" and familiarize oneself with the human body. The animation is nicer: Each time you move, a graphics block representing your submarine moves on the screen along the bodily path you are taking. You can also get a report which shows the organs which are suffering cancer, and draw a diagram of the circulatory system (which gets pretty cluttered with TRS-80 graphic blocks).

The main problem is the graphics. The animation of your submarine moving is nice, but the resolution is not good. This is a problem, especially since a map of the circulatory system makes a city road map look simple! If an Apple version comes out, I'm sure this will not be a problem. It would be nice if there was a way to distinguish between your sub and a cancer cell. Also, bear in mind that the game is not a nice long adventure that you can sit down and play continually for days on end.

This is basically a nifty little game based on a popular SF theme. It has the added advantage of being educational. I learned more about human anatomy from this game than I did in my biology class!

– Russ Williams

WARLORDS (Atari); $24.95. Cartridge for the Atari video computer. Includes one cartridge and a 7-page rule booklet. One to four players; playing time 15 minutes. Published 1981.

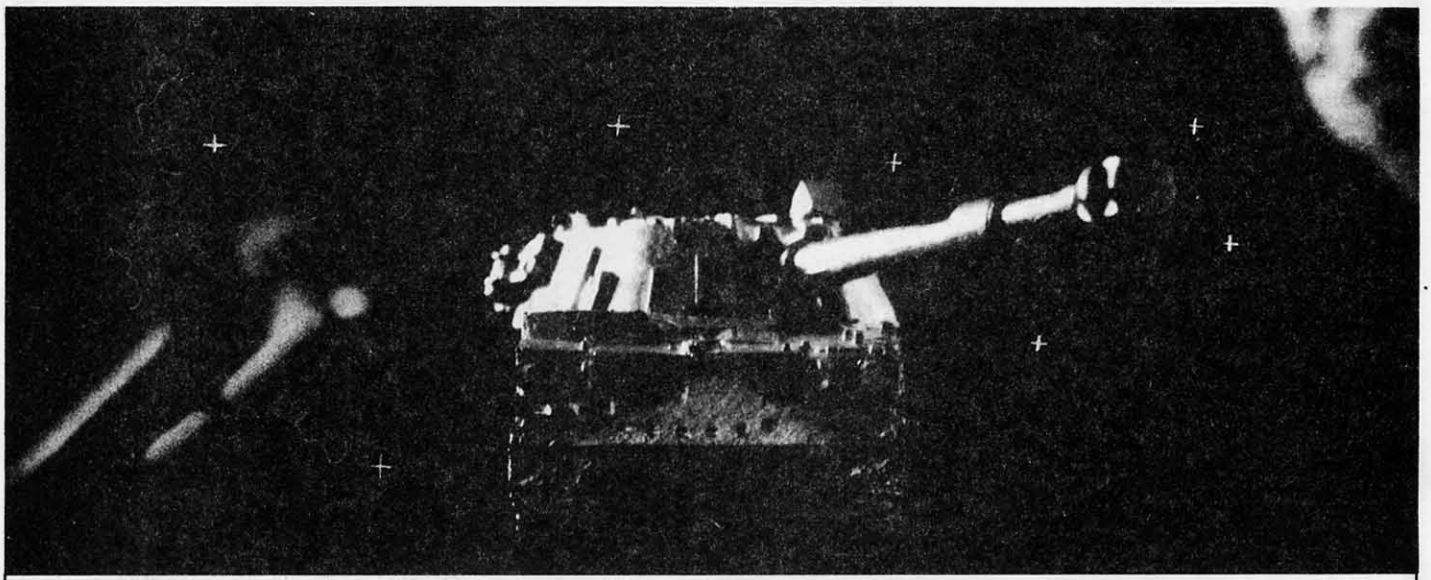
WARLORDS is a fast, competitive game in which each player tries to use his paddle to bounce the "fireball" at opponents' castles. The object is to break through the bricks of the castles and kill the enemy kings. The last player on the screen wins. The game includes variable speed for the fireball/lightning, one to four players with the computer controlling those castles not taken by players, optional catch control which allows players to hold the ball and aim it, and a special children's version for beginners and youngsters.

WARLORDS is one of Atari's fastest and fiercest games of competition. With the fast ball, catch option, and four players, the contest can go on for several minutes as each player tries to watch three enemies and still keep an eye on the ball. To insure that the better (not luckier) player wins the game, it is played in rounds. The first player to win five rounds wins the game.

Unfortunately, the enjoyment is relative to the number of players and computer opponents can easily be beaten. The graphics are so-so to poor and the program itself seems to have some problems. During play the ball will sometimes take out a block of castle which is located behind other undamaged blocks. The idea of multiple rounds is nice, but five rounds to win is a bit much when four fairly equal opponents play, as it can lead to 15+ rounds. Perhaps three rounds to win would have been better.

If you have a need for a multi-player game for your Atari, then this is it. But for one or two players, it'd be better to pass it up.

– Richard A. Edwards



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PBM Update

UNIVERSE III (Central Texas Computing)

Game News:

Quadrant V: Reports of Terran ships turned rogue continue to come in. Several player contacts with the Muar Empire have produced very little except threatening messages. Some concern on the part of the Etuel trading planets is evident – at least one planet appears to fear Terran collaboration with Muar plans for expansion into the Quadrant, and these fears are heightened by attacks on Terrans.

Quadrant VI: No civilized planets have been found in this quadrant to date, although several Terran captains have retrieved parts of Muar artifacts. Exploration of this quadrant is sketchy at best, and little information is available.

Company News: Quadrant VI is up and running, and there were more than 180 players in the game by the first of November. Quadrant VII is expected to open in December or January, and work on our new tribal game, *Nomads,* progresses. Expect about a 10 day hiatus in turn processing in late December, to accommodate our staff's Christmas vacation.

–David Bolduc

UNIVERSE II (Clemens & Associates)

Company News: Our move is complete and all correspondence should be addressed to Clemens & Associates, Inc., P.O. Box 4297, San Clemente, CA 92672.

Game News:

Quadrant I: The Regajian Empire is expanding, causing clashes with neighboring Terran bases. Two major counterattacks are brewing.

Quadrant II: The powerful Shikasta colony has come under attack. It isn't known whether this is associated with the Valarian expansion or not.

Quadrant III: The UTSC base has become a major installation and dominates that immediate area. Other alliances are also building up their areas.

Quadrant IV: Widespread exploration efforts are uncovering many undiscovered star systems.

–Jon Clemens

THE TRIBES OF CRANE (Schubel & Son)

Company News: We have received delivery of our enhanced computer equipment. We now have a multi-terminal, multi-processing system based on a 23 million byte hard disk system and an optical scan reader which allows us to process four different games simultaneously. We believe this new equipment will bring a much wider range of game possibilities and usher in the next generation in play-by-mail games.

Game News:

Both Crane I and Crane II city leaders are facing an increasing resistance by city people and merchants over trade policy that they feel has caused the local city merchants losses again and again. Any city transaction with a tribe of over 3,000 gold results in inflation and wild swings in the availability of goods, creating havoc with the city economy and especially the fortunes of the merchants. The loyal merchants have tried to function despite these problems, but they fear ruin if such policies continue. The influence of the rich and powerful merchants has in the past kept the small merchants and general peasant class under control. But now they, too, are revolting against policies that grant trade rights and discounts to tribes without regard to the cities' general welfare. Rioting has broken out in the market areas of several cities on both Crane I and Crane II.

On Crane II in the city of Warak, after many months of small riots, the city people, aided by city warriors, stormed the city leader's palace, killing the city leader and establishing a new city government.

The city people of Crane cry for the day when they will receive just trade limits that will protect their interests.

–George Schubel

PBM Update reports on professionally-moderated play-by-mail games. Notices are monthly. Copy deadline is 60 days previous to the first of the month, for the issue in which the notice is to appear. (Deadline for the March issue is January 1.) All copy should be typed and double-spaced. Notices should not exceed 200 words in length. TSG reserves the right to edit copy as necessary.

UNIVERSE III

UNIVERSE III is a computer-moderated correspondence game in which each player commands a starship entering a new universe to explore, colonize, and conquer new worlds, contending with other players and unknown hazards. Each time you send in a turn, the computer will evaluate it with respect to the current game situation and other players' moves, and send you a printout showing your current status. When you "meet" other players, you can send them messages . . . to trade, negotiate, or intimidate.

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Letters

My first impressions of *Adventure Gaming* were quite different from those expressed in the review in TSG 45. Naturally there will be some disagreement of opinion of contents: I thought the "meandering commentaries of being a good 'gamer' " were some of the high points of the first issue, but only a reader who put something into these articles would get something out of them. Perhaps your reviewer judges the articles from a viewpoint of narrow gaming tastes – not the intended audience.

I've seen more than a dozen first issues of professional gaming magazines and every one could be called "extremely uneven." The reviewer implies that there is no article on SF gaming, though in fact there is a lengthy article on *Traveller,* which most of us would call a science fiction game. And I flatly disagree that trying to cover all gaming in one magazine is absurd. (Shall we assume that your reviewer believes that *New Scientist, Scientific American,* and so on are absurd? Science is a much broader field than gaming.) Naturally those who have narrow tastes will not appreciate a broad-based magazine, but this does not make it bad in itself. I think many gamers have been waiting for a magazine that covers the neglected portions of the hobby as well as those most well-known.

Undoubtedly, the layout was weak, but no reader ever failed to understand an article because he had to turn several pages to finish it. Poor layout and shrunken contents are hardly reasons not to buy/read the magazine, as they do not affect the content or readability of articles. A more substantive objection might be to the absence of copy editing.

I don't know what makes a magazine colorful or colorless – I suspect it's purely a matter of opinion – nor is it clear why a magazine ought to have a "lead article," particularly a magazine that tried to cover many aspects of the hobby. A strong emphasis (via a lead article) on one aspect might actually discourage more potential buyers than it attracted. Your reviewer seems to judge *Adventure Gaming* as another *Space Gamer* or *Different Worlds,* which it is not intended to be. In fact, much of the review could be summarized as, "This is an absurd idea." Why not let the readers judge whether the idea is good, since it is easy enough to explain the objective? Gratuitous insertion of the reviewer's personal opinion does not help the reader.

On the basis of the first issue I recommended (in a review in *Pegasus*) that gamers should take a look at one of the early issues to decide whether to subscribe. And I believe that the later issues of *Adventure Gaming* show marked improvement over no. 1.

Lewis Pulsipher
Durham, NC

We recently did a survey of our customers to determine what game hobby publications they read most often. *The Space Gamer* was listed among the top three. In addition I have received several nice comments about the play-by-mail update section.

I am very pleased with the update section. Keep up the good work.

Patty Schubel
Schubel & Son

The *Killer* article in TSG 45 incorrectly states that the period of the Foucault pendulum is 24 hours. This is true only for a pendulum suspended at the north or south pole. The general formula for the period of a Foucault pendulum is

$$T = \frac{24}{\sin L} \text{ hours}$$

where L is the latitude of the location where the pendulum is placed. This is = 24 only when $L = 90^{o}$ (the poles). At L = 0 (the equator) T effectively becomes infinite.

For areas inside the continental U.S., T will be somewhere around 40 hours (the pendulum at the U.N. building in NY City has T = 36 hours).

Charlie Allen
Champaign, IL

I read with great interest your "soap box commentary" on the banning of weapons, both mock and real, at conventions (TSG 46). As one who has heard convincing arguments on both sides of the issue, and as one of the principals involved in TexCon: 1981 and TexCon: 1982, may I offer a third side to the issue?

When the issue of whether to allow weapons at TexCon: 1981 first came up, we checked on the feasibility of bearing weapons at the convention site. We were informed by the owners of the site that, even if they allowed weapons (doubtful), we would have to purchase insurance. Why insurance you ask? Simple: fear of rowdies damaging one another. Ah, then, why not throw the rowdies out? Well, the problem is we don't have a good idea who the rowdies are until they have already damaged each other. And once we have thrown them out, how do we keep them out? Hire a security guard? Or maybe we could implement a statewide blacklist to keep these people out in the first place, but that seems a drastic (and futile) measure to take.

In Austin, $300 is the lowest rate agents will offer for handling any insurance of this sort, even for a two- or three-day event. We felt that was a little too much to absorb (it would represent 20% of our budget), so we banned weapons at TexCon: 1981. Unless the situation changes significantly, weapons will be banned at Tex Con: 1982. We realize this is disappointing to some, but we felt it was unfair to the gamers as a whole to raise admission prices a couple of bucks so that a few could exercise their freedom of expression.

Martha Ladyman
Austin, TX

The insurance question is a legitimate one, with respect to real weapons – and has nothing whatsoever to do with the question of ***costume*** *weapons, which the anti-weapon fanatics also insist on banning.*

–SJ

News & Plugs

Metagaming has licensed Gamelords to produce supplements for *The Fantasy Trip.*

Strategic Simulations is developing a campaign game based on *The Warp Factor.*

The publishers of *Purser's Magazine* offer a *Buyer's Guide* on software for the Atari. Price: $2.00.

Harry's House (101 W. 61st St., Westmont, IL 60559) sells a three-ring GM binder. Price: $5.00.

On-Line Systems has released the adventure game *Time Zone,* which occupies both sides of nine floppy disks. Hardware required: 48K Apple. Price: $99.95.

Adventure Games offers a series of supplements to *Empire of the Petal Throne.* Prices range $3.95-$13.95.

Rumor: Heritage has acquired rights to *Conan* for miniatures and a role-playing system.

Michael Gray, formerly senior product designer for Milton Bradley, is now working for TSR.

The Almar Press (4105 Marietta Dr., Binghamton, NY 13903) has published *Solo Games,* a 60-page book with rules and components for 12 games. Price: $12.95.

Artworx Software (150 N. Main St., Fairport, NY 14450) has released nine programs for the Atari, including the space games *Encounter at Questar IV* ($23.95), *Rocket Raiders* ($19.95), and *Space Trap* ($14.95); also, two adventure programs: *Cranston Manor* ($21.95) and *Vaults of Zurich* ($21.95).

Rumor: A group of game designers has gotten together to create an "International Fantasy Gaming Society," named after the one in *Dream Park.*

Grenadier has added some figures to its D&D monsters line, including a xorn and an umber hulk.

Rumor: Paranoia Press will soon be producing supplements for *Universe.*

CALENDAR

January 16-17, 1982: SON OF GENGHIS CON. RPGs and other games. Contact Denver Gamers Association, Box 2945, Littleton, CO 80161.

January 23-25: GAMES CON. Wargaming. Contact Games Con 1982, P.O. Box 1016, Canberra Act 2601 AUSTRALIA.

February 5-7, 1982: GENCON SOUTH VI. Wargaming con. Contact at P.O. Box 16371, Jacksonville, FL 32216.

February 5-7. 1982: WARCON. RPGs, boardgames, etc. Contact David (Kong) Heiligmann, Chairman – Warcon '82, P.O. Box J-1, College Station, TX 77844, 713-845-1515.

February 12-14, 1982: MAINECON '82. RPGs, boardgames, historical miniatures, etc. Contact John Wheeler, Mainecon '82 Director, 245 Water St., Bath, ME 04530.

February 12-15: MANNHEIMER-CON '82. Miniatures, board games. Mannheim Middle School in Mannheim, West Germany. Contact Grenadierstrausse Kriegspiel Society, 181st Trans Bn, APO NY 09166.

February 13-15: DUNDRA CON VI. SF & RPG con. Dunfey Hotel, San Mateo, CA. Contact at 386 Alcatraz Ave., Oakland, CA 94618.

February 13-15, 1982: ORCCON '82. Strategy games. Sheraton-Anaheim Hotel near Disneyland. Contact @ Orccon, PR Dept., P.O. Box 2577, Anaheim, CA 92804.

March 13-15: FANTASYLAIR '82. RPGs, boardgames, war simulations, costume fantasy ball. Contact Northern Oklahoma Dungeoneers, P.O. Box 241, Ponca City, OK 74602-0241.

June 5-6: GENGHIS CON IV. Games, miniatures, auction. Contact Denver Gamers Association, Box 2945, Littleton, CO 80161.

June 18-20: HOUSTONCON '82. Nostalgia, SF&F. Contact L-5 Society, P.O. Box 713, Stafford, TX 77477-0713.

June 18-20: SF CON V (formerly CONEBULUS). Science fiction con with wargaming. Contact at 337 Hartford Rd., Syracuse, NY 13208.

August 6-8: TEXCON 1982. D&D, Car Wars, etc. For more information, send SASE to TexCon '82, 8028 Gessner No. 1805, Austin, TX 78753.

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MURPHY'S RULES

REPRODUCTION PROBLEM
Star Patrol includes the following: "SEX – This table is not usually necessary as sex would hardly ever crop up in a game."
HARMONIOUS FEET
In *Skull & Crossbones*, a kick is about as dangerous as a sword blow.
SONAR SILLINESS
In *Torpedo Fire*, the convoy player has about a 20% chance of a false sighting per minute. That averages out to almost 300 false sightings each day.
NO PARKING
SHALLOWS OF SPACE
Ships in interplanetary space have a stacking limit of "one," according to the designers of the game *Diadem*.

Missing Persons

We have been advised by our bank that if a check is not cashed within 6 months of the date it was written, it is void. Therefore, will the following people please contact the Business Manager with a current address, so that a replacement check may be issued for the old, uncashed contributor payment checks:

Alex Alford
Craig Barber
Robert Bingham
Jerry Conner
Dianne Galanti
Carlos Gonzales
Eric Richards

Also, we would appreciate it if the following people would contact the editorial department:

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STEVE JACKSON GAMES

TSG BACK ISSUES

No. 15. Wizard and Olympica designer intros; Robotics in Traveller; Floating Hulks; Ogre Update; Orcs and their Weapons; computer gaming.

No. 16. WarpWar article; Classics Simulated in Melee; Alpha Omega; Demons! (Moties in Melee); 1977 game survey results – and a LOT of reviews.

No. 17. GEV designer's intro; strategy for Chitin: I; variants for Imperium, Melee, and a combination Ogre/Rivets variant; WarpWar fiction.

No. 18. IceWar designer's intro; variant scenarios for Invasion: America and War of the Ring; additional equipment for Traveller; mounted Melee; "Referee, Declare Thyself!" (role-playing GM technique).

No. 19. POND WAR; variant units and scenarios for GEV; combining Imperium and WarpWar; Battlefleet Mars variant; reviews of Swords & Sorcery, RuneQuest, and Raumkrieg; MicroGame design article.

No. 20. Olympica tactics; Psionics in Traveller; TARTARS & MARTYRS; Reality in Melee; designer's optional rules for Ice War; designer's article on Starships & Spacemen; "Rip-Off Blues" (wargaming frauds).

No. 21. Interview with Dave Arneson; running a MicroGame tournament; tactics for Ogre and GEV; spaceship miniatures; Black Hole variant rules, putting the Deryni into Melee; more reviews.

No. 22. Ice War tactics; Black Hole physics; PARTY BRAWL; 1978 SF/fantasy game survey results; Fantasy Trip short story.

No. 23. Invasion of the Air Eaters designer's article; Ogre meets Ice War; Sticks & Stones expansion; Vikings and Valde in The Fantasy Trip.

No. 24. Black Hole designer's intro; "The Psychology of Wargaming"; Naval Melee; "The Four-Howitzer Defense in Ogre;" variants for Chitin: I, The Creature that Ate Sheboygan, and John Carter of Mars.

No. 25. Stellar Conquest issue . . . designer's article, tournament tactics, and variant scenarios; also – strategy in Rivets; benefit-cost analysis for Ice War; "Everyday Life in The Fantasy Trip."

No. 26. Oneworld designer's intro; tactics in GEV; variations on Wizard; computers in wargaming; Life-sized Melee; and a variant that puts human forces into Rivets.

No. 27. Hot Spot's designer's intro; Time Travel; Nuke the Air Eaters (gaming atomic war); Weapons for Hobbits in TFT; Muskets in TFT; Game Design Part 1; 5 pages of game reviews.

No. 28. 1979 Game Survey results; Overmen in TFT; A Guide to SF/Fantasy Game Publishers; Task Force Games report; Writers' and Artists' guides; 7 pages of reviews; Game Design Part 2; Deus Ex Machina.

No. 29. Fantasy Trip designer's intro; Painting Fantasy Miniatures; Fantasy and SF game magazines surveyed; Game Design Part 3; more Deus Ex Machina; 7 pages of reviews.

No. 30. KUNG FU 2100; Painting Fantasy Miniatures Part II; Index to Game Articles; Game Design Part 4; Programmable Calculators; 10 pages of reviews.

No. 31. "Sam Beowulf"; 1980 Game Software survey; Game Design Part 5; Random Maze Generation; 9 pages of reviews.

No. 32. Traveller issue: Alternate Character Types, reviews of play aids, scenarios, and variants; also Game Design Part 6; Deus Ex Machina; "Minus Two Reaction;" software survey update; Yaquinto Games report; 9 pages of reviews.

No. 33. Play-by-mail issue: Feature reviews of four PBM games, a Warp War Campaign, Survey of PBM companies; also, Contest Report; Company Report from Schubel and Son; "End Game;" GEV scenario; Game Design Part 7; Deus Ex Machina; The Good Guys, Part I; and 10 pages of reviews.

No. 34. Miniatures issue: Cardboard Heroes Designer's Notes, LOTR Miniatures, Painting Fantasy Miniatures Advanced Techniques, Survey of miniatures manufacturers; also "The Challenge;" Artifact Designer's Notes and Expansion Rules; 3-D Displays II; Game Design Part 8; Wish Contest winner; and 8 pages of reviews.

No. 35. The 1980 Game Survey; Solitaire Ogre; Notes for Novice DMs; The War of the Worlds featured; Insane Variants on Stomp!; Character Contest results; More Psionics for Traveller; Game Design Part IX; Deus Ex Machina; and 9 pages of reviews.

No. 36. Computing damage in Star Fleet Battles; The Fire Web, Artifact for Traveller; a Featured Review of Akalabeth; Eon Products Company Report; The Ten Deadly Sins of Computer Game Programming; Computer Graphics contest winner; and 8 pages of reviews.

No. 37. Gaming the Alien; Hyborean Risk; Improved Mission Resolution for Freedom in the Galaxy; Troubles in Valetia; Cosmic Encounter Review; FGU Company Report; Winners of the Weapons Contest; Ten Deadly Sins Part II; and 6 pages of reviews.

No. 38. 1980 Game Survey Results; Designer Notes for The Lords of UnderEarth; Used ships for Traveller; Selling Your Game Article; Expert D&D and Time War reviewed; Combination Game Contest; The Complaints Department; and 7 pages of reviews.

No. 39. Computer issue: Designer's Notes on Akalabeth, Strategic Simulations Report, Strategy in the Warp Factor, Computers to Go, a TRS-80 Briefing, An update on the gaming world; also Rumor Reliability in Traveller; Scenario for Triplanetary; Magic contest results; Simple Traps; and 8 pages of reviews.

No. 40. Traveller issue: Planet of Adventure: Tschai, a new Traveller combat system, Non-Human Races contest winners, Aboard the Leviathan; also Cumulative Index to Game Articles; Game Design: RPGs; Deus Ex Machina; and 6 pages of reviews.

No. 41. D&D issue: Tips for Thieves, Alternate Races for D&D, DM Don'ts, (Your Name) and the Holy Grail; also Tips for TFT Players; more Non-humans contest winners; Game Design (last of the series); Deus Ex Machina; and 9 pages of reviews.

No. 42. Star Trek issue: Designer's Notes, Official Errata, Star Fleet Battle Manual reviewed, programming dialog in Trek computer games; also Metamorphosis Alpha Notebook; glossary of game terms – and what they really mean; combined arms in D&D; more nonhuman races; GEV contest winners; and 8 pages of reviews.

No. 43. Origins Report; Expanded Combat for Traveller; Designer's Notes for Swordthrust; Diplomacy Variants; More Killer; "Sword's Man" by Timothy Zahn; Deus Ex Machina; and 9 pages of reviews.

No. 44. Special feature: AFVs in Traveller; Beware the Uranium Dragon; Fantasy Demography; another scenario for Killer; Featured review of Universe; Deus Ex Machina; and 8 pages of reviews.

No. 45. Computer issue: Automated Simulations company report, Play-by-Phone computer gaming; also winning strategies for StarWeb; Designer's Notes for Grimtooth's Traps and Car Wars; reviews of Robot War and Nebula 19; Glossary contest results; Murphy's Rules; and 11 pages of reviews.

No. 46. Traveller issue: Terrorists in Traveller, Expanding Traveller, Traveller Supplement – Flare Star; also "The FBI Affair;" Constellation contest results; Featured Reviews of Wizardry and Fifth Frontier War; Deus Ex Machina, and 9 pages of reviews.

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Suddenly the Astrogater on the bridge let loose a scream that shattered the silence, and alarms sounded throughout the ship. Almost simultaneously, as the sound of running feet echoed down the fast-filling corridors, a Klingon ship materialized, as if from a mist, its phasers crackling forth pure blue bolts of raw lightning energy, stinging across the void, leaving behind the acrid tang of burnt ozone. The Captain stiffened, barking his orders with a seasoned control, a careful calm. But his heart kept pounding faster and faster, his mind a feverish blur of activity. The Klingons had invaded

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